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MUSINGS & MEMORIES OF A MUSICIAN

BY

SIR GEORGE HENSCHEL, Mus. Doc.

WITH A PORTRAIT

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1918.

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TO

AMY

BUT FOR WHOSE TIMELY AND COMPASSIONATE
RESUSCITATION THE WRITER WOULD
MOST LIKELY BE REPOSING AT THE BOTTOM
OF LETHE WHERE IT IS DEEPEST
THESE PAGES
ARE AFFECTIONATELY
INSCRIBED

THIS book was written and in type before the War. The courtesy of the Publishers however, which I take this opportunity of gratefully acknowledging, has made it possible to make such—happily few—additions and alterations as the deaths, since, of some of the friends mentioned therein, rendered desirable; and to change the name of St. Petersburg to Petrograd.

G. H.

ALLTNACRICHE, AVIEMORE,
October, 1918.

I

SHAKESPEARE'S "All the world's a stage" must appear of particular aptness and truth to the man who, approaching the threescore and ten of the Patriarch, reviews his past with the object of writing down his reminiscences.

Looking back on the events of his life he sees them as he would so many scenes in an old stage-play upon which the curtain has fallen long ago, and the men and women who appeared in them pass before his spiritual vision like actors and actresses; some having stirred his imagination, kindled the fire of his enthusiasm, some touched him to tears, provoked his mirth: some perhaps exceeded his expectations, some fallen short of them; but all having left some mark, some impression on his mind, lasting for a longer or shorter period, according to their part and to the manner in which it was acted.

I shall never forget a little incident at the Court Theatre of Weimar long years ago. The play had been Shakespeare's *King Lear*. It

was exceedingly well done as a whole, and the impersonation, in particular, by the chief actor —a member of the regular company—of the tragic and majestically pathetic figure of the aged king, was a wonderfully fine and powerful performance. At the end of the play, amid the enthusiasm of the crowded house, the chief actor was vociferously called before the curtain over and over again. At last, when recalled for the tenth time or so, he seemed quite overcome with emotion on receiving so great an ovation in the historical playhouse which could boast the traditions of Goethe and Schiller, and, bowing deeply, he was heard to mutter—audible, however, to part of the audience—" I think I have merited it." This, many people, and some of the Press, considered a great piece of arrogance and self-conceit on the part of the actor, whilst I emphatically held with the few who, in that no doubt unusual utterance, could see nothing but the innocent, in the excitement of the moment thoughtlessly escaped, expression of the artist's consciousness of having given, having done his best; and I have often thought since then, how it would by no means be a deplorable state of things if more of the actors on the stage of Life could make their final exits with that consciousness, whether unnoticed or amid the plaudits of the multitude.

People who care to read a man's "Recollections" at all are generally supposed to be desirous of also knowing something of the man himself. Thus it is that the wish to gratify the reader's curiosity imposes upon me, strangely enough, the necessity of commencing these recollections with the very fact of which I have no recollection whatever, namely, my birth; and here again it strikes me as rather curious that that essential and certainly most important event in a man's life, his birth, should be just the one he cannot possibly help. Yet, taken for granted I had raised no objection to being born at all, I doubt if I could have chosen a more interesting place for my first appearance than dear old picturesque Breslau, or kinder, more loving parents to be welcomed by on my arrival in this world on the 18th of February 1850, than Moritz Jacob Henschel and Henriette Frankenstein, his wife.

This being no autobiography, I shall pass as quickly as possible over the first stages of my childhood, the events of which, though doubtless full of importance and wonder to the happy mother whose only son I was—there were two sons and a daughter by my father's first marriage—would hardly prove of sufficient interest to be recorded here.

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humble, but proud of his Polish descent, as all Poles are, and justified in being, was a wool- and coal-merchant who, being busy all day in his little office on the first floor of the big apartment-house in which we occupied part of the second story, could not devote more time to his children than he was able to snatch from the short-enough meal-hours. It was left to my mother to see to the education of her own particular boy, before that—I fear not always very manageable—youngster was sent to school. Anticipating the now popular system of teaching by observation, she was in the habit of taking me from room to room, pointing out and explaining to me the different objects in it, and their origin and use. Evidently, as the following example will show, she was anxious to impress early upon my little mind the folly and the danger of judging by appearances. In the blue room, called " the good room " (*die gute*, or, in the Silesian dialect, *die " gutte " Stube*), a luxury nearly every respectable family aspired to, there was hanging an engraving, depicting the Emperor Napoleon inspecting an artillery depot at Fontainebleau. What a wonderful thing memory is ! I could draw the pattern of the wall-paper in that room, and every detail of the engraving to-day. Next to a heavy piece of ordnance was standing at attention,

in a beautiful uniform, and holding in his right hand a long ramrod, a very tall gunner, made taller still by the huge bearskin busby on his head. Over the cannon was leaning a little man in a long riding-coat, high boots reaching to above the knees, and a queer-shaped, two-cornered hat, his hands folded behind his back. To this picture I remember my mother carrying me, in her arms, when I was still tiny enough for this ignominious though affectionate mode of transportation, and asking me, "Now tell me, which of these two men is the great Emperor Napoleon?" Whereupon I promptly pointed to the big gunner, and was gently put right with a smile and a kiss. Do not many of us remain, in that respect, children to the end? I think of "Napoleon at Fontainebleau" each time I see weight taken for worth.

Another little experience of my early school-days I cannot refrain from mentioning, which stands out from the background of my memory with a particular vividness. It led to the first keen, almost tragic disillusion of my life, and also, incidentally, sheds a curious sidelight on the social economics of a Silesian town in the early 'fifties of the last century.

Our house in the "Schuhbrücke" (shoe-bridge) stood at the corner of the Kupfer-schmiedesstrasse (Coppersmith's street), crossing

which, on the way to school in the morning, I had to pass, on the opposite corner, an old woman who, on certain days in the week, sat there, surrounded by baskets and sacks, out of which she sold cherries, plums, tiny, but very tasty, little pears called cinnamon pears, apples, medlars, walnuts, etc., in their seasons. Being fond of fruit, I soon came to stand on intimate terms with her, for whenever I thought I could afford it — my weekly allowance was one "dreier" (a copper coin of the value of a farthing)—I would stop and, handing her a pfennig, say, "Please for half a pfennig cherries and for half a pfennig pears." And I would with both hands take hold of the hem of my garment, which was a loose sort of tunic held together round the waist by a belt, and make an apron of it, into which the kind creature showered a handful or two each of the desired luxuries. Now it must not be supposed that the pfennig of which I am speaking was anything like the English penny except for the similarity in the sound of its name. Far from it. It took twelve of these pfennige —the decimal system was not introduced into Prussia until 1870 — to make a groschen (groat), and it was that groschen which was the equivalent of the English penny. It will be seen therefore that on those occasions I

feasted on cherries or pears or other fruit, as the case might be, at the cost of the third part of a farthing! Can British brain grasp the grandeur of such smallness? I may mention here in parenthesis that eggs were then sold in Silesia by the "mandel" (fifteen), or by the "schock" (sixty), and I remember hearing my mother occasionally complain of eggs having gone up in price from twenty-five to thirty pfennige (twopence halfpenny) the mandel!

But to proceed to the tragedy. Farther up the street there was a big grocer's shop before which, on the pavement, some of its particular attractions were arrayed in what seemed to me a wickedly tempting manner. Especially was it a luscious-looking fruit which gave me a pang each time I passed. It was of the size of an average apple, brilliantly red in colour and with a beautiful, smooth, transparent skin as of a plum. Oh, to be rich—I thought—and for once taste a sweetness such as this fruit must be full of! One morning, seeing the master of the shop standing outside, I took courage and boldly asked him the price of "that"—pointing to the coveted forbidden fruit. "Eight pfennige each" was the short, cruel reply. Eight pfennige! Nearly three weeks' allowance! Still, my mind was made up—I must save, save! And at last, after

weeks of self-denial, I triumphantly went into the shop with my eight pfennige, counted them into the man's hand, grasped one of the largest of the precious fruit and—the big bite I took did not pass my palate. As fast as my feet would carry me I hurried into an empty narrow lane close by and there, unobserved, and in utter wretchedness — physical and moral— deposited on to a rubbish-heap the contents of my mouth and the rest of the cursed thing, the like of which for years afterwards I could not even look on without a shudder—*a tomato !*

II

Breslau, the ancient capital of Silesia,—that much-coveted province which, after being ruled for centuries by Polish kings and German princes, later became part of the Austrian Empire, and was finally wrested from Maria Theresa by Frederick the Great in the second half of the eighteenth century, since when it has belonged, as it belongs now, to Prussia,—is the proud possessor of a famous University, the founders of which must have had a very high idea of the educational value of music; for connected with that centre of learning there always had been, as there is now, an Institute of Church Music, the performances of which were not confined to the members of the University, but open to the public, which means that for centuries past—the foundation of Breslau itself dates from the ninth—music must always have had a large share in the artistic pursuits and enjoyments of its citizens.

At the period of my boyhood that Institute

was flourishing under the guidance of Musik-director Professor Julius Schäffer, who also conducted the "Sing-Akademie," the premier Choral Society of the place, whose performances of the *Messiah* at Christmas and of Haydn's *Creation* at Easter came as regularly once a year as those seasons themselves. Schäffer was likewise the founder and conductor of the "Musical Circle," a private, very exclusive singing club, to the membership of which only people of high social standing could attain; and it speaks well for the culture of that class of society that many of the amateurs who took the solo parts at the club's performances could, like Elsbeth Donniges or Count Danckelmann, have held their own among the best professional singers of the day. Light and popular orchestral music was provided by military bands, of which there were three or four in the town. These bands played in almost daily concerts which during the warm season took place in the numerous beer-gardens and milk-gardens situated all along the "Promenaden"—shady, beautiful avenues into which the moats of the old fortifications had been converted.

To these gardens mothers would, in the afternoon, take their work and their children, and many an enjoyable and profitable hour I spent there, listening to selections from Haydn,

Mozart, Beethoven, Auber, Bellini, Boieldieu, Donizetti, Verdi, not to forget the then popular dance-music of Lanner and Joh. Strauss the elder. I well remember standing for hours at a time on the pebbles before the pavilion in which the band played, wondering why the man up in front there, who kept beating the air with a short ebony stick with ivory ends, faced *me* and not the orchestra; for, strange and almost incredible as it may seem, at that time all military, and even some conductors of popular symphony concerts, used to have their backs turned to the men. Rather different from nowadays, when a simple flash from the eagle eye of one of our Titan conductors will perhaps produce a fortissimo powerful enough to shake the casements, or else a raised eyebrow, accompanied by a gentle wave of the hand, check the aspirations of a too-impulsive energy into a triple piano!

The highest class of orchestral music could be heard during the winter season at the concerts of the Orchester-Verein (Orchestra Union), an institution among the active members of which could at that time be found University professors, physicians, army officers, and others prominent in society, and it was not always an easy task for the, of course professional, conductor to persuade some of

these enthusiastic dilettanti that their skill would not advance with their years.

The conductor of the orchestra was at that time Dr. Leopold Damrosch, a man of great refinement and culture, as well as of particular personal charm, who, originally destined for the medical profession, in which he had already made his mark—his "Dr." was that of medicine—finally left it for the art he loved best, and in which in later years he became famous on the other side of the Atlantic, where, to mention only one of his many artistic achievements, he founded the New York Oratorio Society, and where to-day, in the city of New York, his two sons, Walter and Frank, are successfully continuing the life-work of their distinguished father. Dr. Damrosch, besides the orchestra, also conducted in Breslau a small but efficient choral society of his own, with which, in contrast to Dr. Schäffer, who confined himself to oratorio, he gave from time to time performances of more modern works. Indeed he was an enthusiastic apostle of what was then called "Zukunftsmusik" (Music of the Future), and one of the early champions of Liszt and Wagner. At these concerts the Soprano Soli were frequently sung by Dr. Damrosch's beautiful wife, Helene von Heimburg, a singer of rare accomplishments, and

gifted with a most sympathetic voice. Her singing, for instance, of the part of "Die Jungfrau" in Schumann's *Paradise and Peri* still lingers in my memory, as I am sure it does in that of all who had the good fortune to hear it, as something singularly beautiful and touching.

There was altogether—of the opera I shall speak later on—great activity in the musical life of Breslau, then a town of about 120,000 inhabitants. Among the many music schools one, of a decidedly novel character, proved to be of particular influence on my future: a school for pianoforte-playing, at which that art was taught in a very original way, invented by the director, Louis Wandelt by name.

There were in the institute about ten large rooms, the entire furniture of which consisted of four, six, or even eight grand pianofortes, placed in dovetailed fashion, before each of which there would, at lesson time, sit a little pupil, and those four or six or eight girls and boys had to play, simultaneously, the same exercises and pieces to the ticking of a Maelzel metronome, the teacher going from pupil to pupil, noting the application of the fingers, the position of the hands, encouraging, scolding, as the case might be, and putting down the marks in each pupil's little record book which

every Saturday had to be taken home to be shown to the parents and signed by one of them. To that school which, by the way, was also responsible for the primary musical education of that excellent pianist Mme. Haas, my father and mother, who had a deep love and feeling for music, though practical musicians only in a very modest way, with voice and guitar, sent me when I was just five years old, and I have always been grateful to them for doing so, for I consider that Wandelt method of teaching the elements of piano-playing an exemplary one for children, stimulating, as it does, the ambition of the youngsters, and, above all, instilling into them a sense for rhythm which is apt to stick to them all their lives.

When, in the autumn of 1862, Mr. Wandelt founded a similar school in Berlin he took with him for the opening ceremony, consisting of a public concert, four of his " show " pupils, and we four played in a real, big concert-hall, accompanied by a real big orchestra,—how proud we were !—Weber's Concertstück in F minor on four pianofortes, I also, with the leader of the orchestra, Mozart's Sonata in C for Pianoforte and Violin.

I well remember the pride of my mother as she packed my little valise for the great journey from Breslau to Berlin, putting into it, among

other things, a brand new suit of clothes, to wit, a short broadcloth jacket, richly braided; a beautiful embroidered shirt with frills in front, round the collar and at the cuffs; a lovely leather belt and a glorious pair of long trousers, into the left pocket of which the dear woman had, unknown to me, sewn a piece of superstition in the shape of a little crust of bread, to avert evil. The amusing part of this was that, as I was dressing—or rather being dressed—for the concert and proudly putting my hands into my pockets, I quickly withdrew my left with a cry. The dried-up sharp points of the crust had grazed my skin and very nearly prevented my playing at the concert!

Side by side with learning to play the piano I was taught the elements of singing by a Mr. Hirschberg, and harmony by Professor Schäffer, under whose conductorship I sang, when a little over nine years old, the soprano solo in Mendelssohn's *Hear my Prayer* at a concert of the Church Music Society. How I loved that beautiful air "Oh, for the wings, for the wings of a dove," and how I flushed with elation and pleasure when I received a bright new thaler (three shillings) into the bargain!

Soon my voice changed into an alto, and as an "alto-boy" in the chorus of the Sing-

Academie, I took part for some years in the weekly practices, and afterwards the performances of the *Creation* and the *Messiah*, with the result that I know the alto part of some of the choruses by heart to this day. They *did* rehearse things then!

From an alto it was a natural step to tenor, and soon I sang the big tenor arias from the *Huguenots*, the *Prophet*, *Il Trovatore*, etc., with great gusto and all the aplomb of an old stager, much to the delight and amusement of my audiences, consisting mostly of father and mother and the rest of the family and friends. I revelled in holding a high B natural or C with full-chest voice, and already commenced to see before my mind's eye thousands of people crowding into the opera-house to hear the great Henschelini, or rather Angelini, as I intended calling myself on the stage, when all of a sudden one fine day, coming to breakfast and bidding my father and mother good-morning, the "good," still in tenor, was followed by a "morning" in what seemed to me the deepest bass voice ever heard. So *that* dream was dispelled, gone for ever, and I nothing but an ordinary basso, and as such—in July 1866—I made my first public appearance at a concert for charity which we know for its accommodating qualities as to the

covering of sins. I gave up all thought of opera beyond a continuance of my love for it and my admiration for the singers, of whom a great many celebrities constantly visited Breslau as guests. The greatest impression upon me then was made by that wonderful tenor Schnorr von Carolsfeld—if I am not mistaken, the first to sing "Tristan"—whom one night I had heard as "Raoul" in Meyerbeer's *Huguenots*. I was completely carried away by the nobility of his personality, his graceful acting, his beautiful singing, and gladly suffered the punishment of an hour's "arrest" in school the following day for being late. I had met this glorious man by chance in the street on going to afternoon school and promptly turned round and followed him through street after street, unable to tear myself away, and utterly indifferent as to the possible consequences of my enthusiasm. The opera at the Municipal Theatre of Breslau was at that time very good. The "star" system was not known then. All the singers, women and men, were of a very creditable average—efficient, musical, reliable—and one went to hear the work, not a particular singer. Oh, for the sensation once more of having been fortunate enough to secure, for the week's allowance, which had risen to fifty pfennige, a seat in the front row of the

"Olympus," after climbing up, all aglow with expectation, the four steep flights of narrow stairs! To be thrilled again by the blessing of the swords in the *Huguenots*, the casting of the free-bullets in the *Freischütz*, the bewitching wickedness of *Don Giovanni*, the final triumph of *Fidelio*! Even the shades of those dear ladies-in-waiting of the Queen in the *Huguenots*, old enough then to be my great-grandmothers, smile their melancholy smile upon me through the magic veil of memory, endowed with eternal youth and beauty.

Old Seidelmann, a jovial musician of the good old school, was the conductor. How I envied him!—and his activity as well as the catholicity of the taste of musical Breslau may be gauged by the fact that operas like Auber's *Maurer und Schlosser*, *Fra Diavolo*, *Masaniello*; Beethoven's *Fidelio*; Bellini's *Norma*; Boieldieu's *Dame Blanche*; Flotow's *Martha* and *Stradella*; Hérold's *Zampa*; Kreutzer's *Nachtlager in Granada*; Lortzing's *Czar und Zimmermann* and *Waffenschmied*; Marschner's *Hans Heiling*; Meyerbeer's *Huguenots*, *Dinorah*, *Prophète*, *L'Africaine*; Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, *Figaro*, *Così fan tutte*, *Seraglio*; Rossini's *Barbiere*, *Tell*; Verdi's *Trovatore*, *Rigoletto*, *Traviata*; Wagner's *Flying Dutchman*, *Tannhäuser*, *Lohengrin*;

Weber's *Freischütz*, *Euryanthe*, *Oberon*, *Preciosa*, were permanently on the repertoire; that is to say, every one of these operas could be heard in the course of the year, with the addition perhaps, now and then, of a modern novelty, performed "once in succession." As I also regularly attended the concerts of the "Classische Verein" at which the best chamber music was interpreted by the best local professionals, I thought myself not altogether badly equipped for the Leipsic Conservatory of Music to which my parents had decided to send me, having finally had to acknowledge the fruitlessness of their endeavours to make me choose a soberer, more stable and profitable profession than music was then by them considered to be.

III

To go from Breslau to Leipsic, that is from one country, Prussia, to another, Saxony, was, before 1870, quite an event. In Prussia the silbergroschen (one penny) had twelve, in Saxony ten, pfennige; the postage stamps, too, were different, and the boy about to undertake so interesting a journey into foreign lands was quite a traveller, and very enviable in the eyes of his comrades. It was during the Easter holidays of the year 1867 that my father and I arrived in Leipsic. The multitude of foreigners from all parts of the world who had come to buy and sell at the celebrated Oster-Messe (Easter Fair), the hundreds of wooden booths temporarily erected in the Rossplatz, displaying merchandise of every description, the thousands of people who thronged the brilliantly, albeit pre-electrically, illumined avenues of the huge bazaar at night, the strains of merry music emanating from some subterranean abode of conviviality, all this made the famous old town appear even more gay than I had after-

wards occasion to find it, and I distinctly remember the anxious look in my father's eyes as he bade me good-bye on his return home, evidently not quite reassured as to the wisdom of leaving alone in that "little Paris," as Goethe has called it, a boy of seventeen on the point of throwing off, for the first time, the yoke of paternal vigilance and control. Who could foretell the result of the experiment? Was my talent sufficient to "make a living" of music? Would I prove morally strong enough to be alone among strangers, free from every restraint, exposed to temptations of all sorts? . . . Dear old father, how well now I understand that troubled face!

In due time I was matriculated as a student of the Conservatory, situated in a dingy old building in a kind of courtyard at the back of the old "Gewandhaus" in the "Neumarkt." The professors to whom I was consigned were Ignace Moscheles for pianoforte, Goetze for singing, Richter—no relation to Dr. Hans—for theory and composition, Papperitz for organ. Goetze, an excellent, painstaking, patient teacher, had as a young man been the original impersonator of "Lohengrin" when that opera was first given in Weimar under the direction of Liszt; Moscheles' name had been familiar to me from his studies for

the pianoforte, and in being introduced to him I felt a certain sensation of awe on shaking the hand of one who had seen Beethoven face to face, and been commissioned by the master to prepare the vocal score of his *Fidelio*.

I found him, however, most kind and sociable, and soon became an almost daily guest at his house, the presiding angel of which was his accomplished, beautiful, and charming wife, a relative of Heinrich Heine's, who remained a motherly friend to me until the end of her life.

My lessons with Moscheles proved highly interesting and profitable, and sometimes amusing as well. He had been trained in, and was the foremost exponent then of, a school of pianoforte-playing as far removed from the modern sledge-hammer clavier technique as Mr. Oliver Wendell Holmes' "one-horse-shay" from a sixty-horse-power motor. I think the dear old gentleman would have had a fit if any of us pupils had forgotten ourselves so far as to lift our hands as much as two inches above the keyboard. Chopin and Schumann were the most advanced composers he admitted for study in his lessons, and I remember well, playing once a phrase of Beethoven's in a somewhat rubato style, his gently chiding me and innocently saying, "My dear sir, you may do

that with Schumann or Chopin, but not when you play Beethoven or *me* ! "

On another occasion I brought him, for his criticism, a pianoforte composition of my own of which he had accepted the dedication. After he had made a slight change or two I asked him if I now should play to him the corrected version. " My dear sir," he said with a smile, " there's no need of that, I hear it all in my mind's ear—I really must tell you a little story about that. When I wrote my concerto with three kettle-drums "—he seemed to feel a particular pride and satisfaction in remembering this then almost unheard-of boldness and revolutionary innovation—" when I wrote my concerto with three kettle-drums, I came to a ' tutti ' which I wanted rather fully and noisily orchestrated. Well — will you believe, I heard that tutti and the noise of the different instruments so distinctly whilst I was writing it, that—*that I got a headache* ! "

My singing lessons with Professor Goetze I also greatly enjoyed, instinctively feeling that the modest man was laying in me the solid foundations of a vocal structure of great simplicity, intended for duration rather than show. Already in the early part of the following year of 1868 I sang the part of " Hans Sachs " in Wagner's *Mastersingers*, performed

with his mother and two charming sisters, was spending the year in Berlin for the purpose of studying the piano under Carl Tausig. Needless to say I accepted with alacrity. The meeting between the young Englishman and me, at a supper-party arranged for the occasion by our mutual friend, developed in the course of the evening into something like an Olympic contest. Evidently bent on doing credit to his master, the young Englishman, a striking-looking, handsome boy of sixteen, with finely-cut features and very pleasant manners, played wonderfully well, thus spurring me on to do my best when *my* turn came. So we went on, actually for hours, he playing and I singing, to the great delight of our host, who, equally interested in us both, confessed to being baffled as to which of us in his opinion had the greater talent, until, at the end of a most enjoyable evening, he had to be satisfied with declaring that both Frederic Cowen—for that was the boy's name—and I had the chance of a brilliant future before us : a future which, alas, at the time I am writing, has turned into a past, though, I am sure, one we neither of us two old friends need be ashamed of.

From the fact that so soon after the commencement of my studies in Leipsic I was called upon to—and did—sing in public, one

might think I had been a most industrious, exemplary student. Truth, I fear, compels me regretfully to confess that far too many precious hours of those two and a half years in Leipsic were given over to play and pastime.

There was, for instance, a particularly great attraction and fascination in a little room of what was then the "Hôtel de Prusse," the original old inn at which Goethe put up when he visited Leipsic for the first time in 1765. The owner, a Mr. Louis Krafft, had partly preserved the room in, partly restored it to, the same state in which Goethe knew and frequented it; it was full of relics and mementoes of the poet, full, above all, of his spirit and atmosphere. In that room a little company of literary and artistic people would meet once a week, in the evening; among them Ludwig Barnay and Emil Claar, young actors destined to become renowned in later years as intendants of great play-houses, the former remembered by London audiences as the "Mark Antony" of the celebrated Meiningen production of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*.

In winter it was the steaming bowl of punch, in summer the cooling "May-bowl," a delicious cup of Moselle and "Waldmeister," an aromatic herb found in the woods, which cheered the table-round, and I used to wonder at and

admire the generosity of mine host of the Goethe-Stube who presided and, I thought, supplied the enlivening draught week after week. I was therefore not a little amused when, many years afterwards, I came to Leipsic again as the soloist at one of the famous Gewandhaus concerts, to which at the time of those youthful symposiums we "Conservatoristen" were only permitted to listen from the elevation of the highest balcony. A card was brought to me in my lodgings (I had succeeded in getting the identical rooms I had occupied when a student)—"Louis Krafft." "How nice of him," I thought, "to call on me in remembrance of the dear old days!" We cordially shook hands—the familiar "thou" had changed into the formal "you,"—he seemed a little embarrassed, congratulated me on my success in the world, expressed his pride on seeing me as a soloist on that illustrious platform, etc., etc.; but somehow or other I had a feeling of there being something else he wanted to say but shrank from saying. The conversation gradually flagged, and I began to wonder when and how the visit would end, when, slowly and hesitatingly, my old friend put his hand in his breast pocket, producing from it—a memento of "Auld Lang Syne"? Yes, indeed: in the shape of a neatly written bill for sixteen bowls

of punch drained by the genial little company of the Goethe-Stube on the sixteen occasions when—unbeknown to myself at the time—the turn of being host had been mine! We had a good laugh over it, and, after the concert, bowl number seventeen.

Carnival was observed as a great festival in Leipsic then. For nearly a week the town used to be *en fête*. In a temporarily erected tent circus performances were given entirely by amateurs in aid of local charities; masked processions in the style of Lord Mayors' shows, with jesters, scenes from plays, topical allusions; huge ornamented cars, drawn by six or more richly caparisoned horses, traversed the streets, and I remember one occasion when, riding in a group from Schiller's *Tell*, dressed as one of the huntsmen in Vogt Gessler's suite, I was on horseback from ten in the morning till dusk. I do hope lessons at the Conservatory were suspended during that week!

IV

It was in the summer of that same year that, at a meeting of the "Allgemeine Tonkünstler-Verein" (General Tone-Artists' Union), held at Altenburg in Saxony, I first met that wonderfully fascinating man Franz Liszt, in some of whose works, produced on that occasion, I had to sing the bass soli. Liszt was beyond expectation kind to me, and only too readily I accepted his most cordial invitation to visit him at his home in Weimar after the meeting.

I settled for some weeks in that famous little capital and daily went to the "Gärtnerei," a charming little garden residence placed at Liszt's disposal by its owner, the reigning Grand-Duke. There Liszt, who, by the way, invariably greeted me by kissing me on both cheeks, held a sort of court, the picturesque old town fairly swarming with past, present and would-be pupils and disciples of the master, male and female, in velvet coats and huge neck-ties, and with long flowing hair. It was, however, by no means pupils only that flocked

to those world-famed Sunday morning "At Homes"; on one of those occasions, for instance, it was my good luck not only to see but also to hear in that historical music-room, besides the illustrious host himself, no fewer and no lesser stars than Anton Rubinstein, Carl Tausig, and Hans von Bülow.

Here there were the four greatest pianists of the time together, not in a vast concert hall, but in a small private room, in their shirt-sleeves, so to say, enabling us privileged fellow-guests to compare, not from memory or distance, but by immediate impression, within the compass of an hour or so, the stupendous power of a Rubinstein with the polished infallibility of a Tausig, the irreproachable classicism of a Bülow with the enchanting grace and romanticism of a Liszt. They are gone, all those four great ones, but the memory of that Sunday morning is more real, more living to me to-day than any reproduction of their playing could be by the wonderfully ingenious musical inventions of this electric age.

In the course of the matinée Liszt, pointing to a parcel he had received from Wagner the day before, and which was lying on the piano, called out to me, "Voilà, mon cher, une jolie bagatelle pour vous," and, taking a stout volume of music out from the brown paper,

we—for by that time I was surrounded by a number of curious and eager faces—discovered it to be the just published score of Wagner's *Walküre*. "Allons donc, mon cher," cried Liszt, "chantons 'Les Adieux de Wotan,'" and he sat down at the piano, I standing next to him bending over the score, and we then and there read that Grand Finale for the first time, amidst frequent exclamations of wonder and delight on the part of the audience, and had to do parts of it over and over again.

For the Christmas holidays I went home to Breslau, where Anton Rubinstein was announced to give, in January 1869, a concert with orchestra. Constantin Sander, the head of the music firm of Leuckart who had their premises on the ground floor of the house I was born in, and where we still lived, was the local manager of the concert, and, having always taken a lively interest in my career, had, much to my joy and pride, arranged that I should associate with the great virtuoso by singing on that occasion an aria with orchestra, and some of Rubinstein's songs to the composer's accompaniment. On the morning of the day of the concert we had the final rehearsal, after which Rubinstein, Sander and I went for luncheon to the finest restaurant of the town, "The Golden Goose," of which, needless to say, I

had up to then only seen the outside. We seated ourselves at the large table in the centre of the room, at the other end of which—it was already past the usual luncheon hour—the only other person in the room, a well-known musical amateur, by profession an Army surgeon, had nearly finished his mid-day meal.

Rubinstein, Sander, and I were just on the point of commencing ours, when from across the table the penetrating military voice of the surgeon called out to Sander: "I say, Sander, how did you like Tausig the other day?" (Tausig had given a pianoforte recital in Breslau the week before.) Sander, by nature a very shy and retiring little man, got quite red in the face with embarrassment, and was still composing an appropriate answer to the perplexing question, when the irrepressible surgeon trumpeted to us: "Well, I can only tell you, compared to Tausig, Rubinstein is nothing but a thrashing flail!"

Now in German a flail does not merely mean the agricultural implement, but is figuratively used to indicate a particularly rude, uncouth, ill-mannered person.

An awful silence followed. Sander's and my spoons, just raised to our lips, nearly dropped into the soup, and for a moment we did not quite know what would happen next.

The unfortunate Army surgeon, evidently becoming aware of something being wrong, clapped his monocle in his eye and, surveying our party, recognised the lion-head of the smiling Rubinstein, who, shaking his mighty mane, bade us pay no attention to the incident. "A public man," he said, "must not mind such things. To tell you the truth, they rather amuse me." The surgeon, however, seemed anything but amused; he got up, hurriedly paid his bill, and left by the back door so as not to pass us.

The concert in the evening was a tremendous success. Rubinstein received a perfect ovation at the end of his D Minor Concerto, and when, that night, I was lying awake in bed and dreaming for a long time before finding sleep, I came to the conclusion that there was not a bad name in the world I should mind being called as long as I could play as well and be as famous as Rubinstein.

In the autumn of 1870 I went to Berlin to continue my studies for a time at the Royal High School for Music, of which Joseph Joachim was the head, and where I continued my vocal studies under Adolph Schulze. Knowing that my father could but ill afford the continuance of my support beyond the paying of the fees for my tuition, I was determined to stand on

my own feet as soon as ever I could. I gave pianoforte lessons at a shilling an hour, and, for more than a year, dined at an underground restaurant "Unter den Linden" for sixpence a meal, together with dear Robert Hausmann, the afterwards famous 'cellist of the Joachim Quartet, and a young Virginian sculptor, Moie Ezechiel, later living in Rome, who introduced me to that stirring war-tune "Dixie," which has never lost the fascination it then exerted on me.

Frequently I was glad even to have, especially at the end of the month, enough to buy a couple of halfpenny buns for my mid-day meal. For my supper, which I shared with my good old friend "Sévère," I generally resorted to the loaf of rye-bread I always kept going in my "pantry"—the lower shelf of a small hanging bookcase—supplementing the repast occasionally with a few pennyworths of sausage or cold cooked meats, the quantity of which varied according to the fluctuating state of my purse.

"Sévère" was my dog—a French poodle which some years before I had begged from the brother of an old Leipsic friend who had no use for the poor animal. I will not belittle Sévère's memory by referring to him as "a" French poodle. He was the most sagacious,

amusing, faithful dog any nationality might have been proud of. One—no, two illustrations of his exceeding cleverness are, I think, worth recording, if only for the benefit of those among my readers who may be as fond of dogs as I was of Sévère.

That I had some difficulty in finding rooms —or rather, a room—where I might be allowed to keep the dog, goes without saying. At last a kind-hearted woman agreed to take me in, not however without my faithfully promising her never to permit the dog to lie on the precious sofa, as rickety an old horsehair-covered excuse for the comfortable piece of furniture rejoicing in that name as ever you saw. But it is no easy matter to fight the instincts of a dog, and Sévère's certainly attracted him to the seat of the couch rather than the hard floor beneath it, where at last, with the assistance of a very innocent horse-whip, I had succeeded in making him spend the night. It was a source of no small satisfaction to me to see him, after coming to my bedside to be said " good-night " to, obediently creep under the sofa and, the next morning, meekly emerge from there when called by me. I hardly know why, but suddenly one day the awful suspicion arose in my mind : What if the dog is deceiving me ? So that evening,

before going to bed, I placed on the seat of the couch little bits of paper in a regular pattern, the slightest interference with which would at once be noticeable. I confess I felt rather mean. Sévère that night went through the routine afore-mentioned in an irreproachable manner, and next morning as usual crawled to me from underneath the sofa. But looking on that, lo and behold! the little bits of paper were scattered all over the place. I jumped out of bed, felt the seat of the couch—it was still warm: Sévère had been comfortably lying on it all night until he thought, seeing the light stealing into the room, it was time for master to wake, when he crept to the floor beneath, there to await his call! Of course I had to be angry, very angry, and after a few caressing strokes of the whip, considered it the best way of curing him to leave the whip, of which he stood in mortal fear, permanently on the seat, being sure he would not willingly go anywhere near it. And he actually was cured. But now comes cleverness number two, which I believe even outstrips what I have just told.

I came home one afternoon as usual with the dog's and my supper nicely wrapped up in paper, placed the parcel on the table, and went to fetch a plate and a knife and fork from the landlady. Very likely the loquacious dame

had kept me a little longer than Sévère thought desirable; anyhow, when I returned I noticed the dog, who only a few minutes before had been most affectionately welcoming me, abjectly cowering in a corner, his head bent down, and his eyes looking up at me with a wonderfully appealing expression. "What's up?" I thought, and went to the table to unpack the parcel—Sévère had saved me that trouble: it was open and its savoury contents by that time safely stowed away in his "little inside."

I never could be really angry with the dog, but thought it my duty to punish him this time. So I went to the sofa to get the whip—it was gone. That is to say, not very far; it was lying on the floor some way between the sofa and Sévère's hiding-place. Incredible as it may seem, the dog, immediately after the accomplishment of his crime, must have become conscious of the severity of it, and his instinct prompted him to remove the implement of punishment! Whether or not I carried out my cruel design I leave to the imagination of my readers.

. . . . . .

Soon the outlook brightened. To the gratification of my teacher no less than to my own, I now commenced to be engaged for oratorio and concerts, not only in Berlin and the

provinces, but also outside of Germany, in Belgium, Holland, Switzerland, Russia. To picturesque, musical, aristocratic Holland and its warm-hearted people, among whom in the course of the years I was to find some of the best and truest friends of my life, I felt myself particularly attracted; a feeling ripening before long into a deep, affectionate attachment.

In Berlin, where I had settled for the time being, many musical homes were opened to me, like Madame Clara Schumann's, the Simrocks', the Joachims'. In the latter house as well as in that of the Simrocks I was soon a frequent guest, participating in the many musical gatherings happening there, and if, needless to say, I grew more and more gratefully conscious of the privilege of a closer acquaintance with so great a musician as Joachim, I confess I hardly to any lesser degree appreciated the wonderful art of his wife. Madame Joachim's was a perfect vocal technique, joined to the gift of a beautiful sonorous contralto voice, great depth of feeling, a keen intellect, a subtle sense of humour, and fine musical perception. These forces she put into the service of an exalted ideal of her art, with the result that there was neither lack nor exuberance, but a sort of Grecian serenity, a faultless balance of values,

so to speak, with just enough of her own personality in everything she did, to render her singing interesting and gratifying beyond the intrinsic merit of the works she interpreted. Many are the singers who please the thousands, but only a very small number satisfy the few as Amalie Joachim did. Like all true artists she was equally good in the simplest song as when rendering a great dramatic part like, for instance, that of the heroine in Gluck's *Iphigenia in Tauris*, a performance of which, at the Berlin Sing-Akademie in 1871, was the first occasion on which I had the honour and privilege of singing with her in public.

Although she had slightly to transpose the part to quite suit her range of voice, her singing of it was a beautiful revelation of dramatic power and restraint, a splendid example of plastic modelling in expression.

Altogether the performance, under Professor Rudorff's conductorship, offered many interesting points, as for instance the singing of the part of Pylades—I sang Orestes, in German "Orest"—by Professor Mantius, an excellent tenor of the old school, whose impersonation of that touching prototype of a sacrificing friend was marked by great feeling and a wonderful control of what there was left of a once magnificent voice. He was no less than forty-four

years my senior, a fact which, in the following morning's account of the performance, had elicited from a witty critic the comment, "Henschel—Orest, Mantius—Beaux restes."

Among the audience of most of the concerts in any way connected with the Joachims, could be seen Madame Joachim's much older friend, Clara Schumann, for whom Brahms until the end of his life cherished a touching, almost filial, love and devotion. She was indeed one of the gentlest, most lovable of women. It was a delight to listen to her as, in her charming melodious voice, from which a certain fascinating Saxon accent was hardly ever absent, she would revive memories of the past. Her art she took very much in earnest, as a high priestess would her religion, and it will surprise many of the younger people of to-day—to give only one illustration—to hear that whenever Madame Schumann and I, as was frequently the case, were the soloists at the same concert and she accompanied me in her husband's songs, we would invariably have a rehearsal of the songs some time before the concert, even though perhaps we had done the same songs only a week before, somewhere else.

I remember a dinner once at Madame Schumann's in Berlin, when, to the wonder and amid frequent exclamations of awe or, some-

times, good-natured disapproval on the part of the hostess, Anton Rubinstein entertained us with a recital of his experiences in the United States, whence he had just returned after a tour of two hundred and fifteen concerts in eight months — and there were no Sunday concerts then—and where once, somewhere out in the wild, woolly West, a man, about an hour before the concert, had thrust his head into Rubinstein's room with the words, " Don't you think, boss, it's about time to have your face blacked ? "

" No, you didn't really ! " gasped poor, bewildered Madame Schumann.

From Berlin I was now almost continually making professional journeys which often kept me " on the road," as they say, for weeks at a time. Musical agencies had only just come into existence, and accepting all engagements as they were offered to me directly, I had to spend more time in railway carriages than would have been the case had an experienced manager, as is now done, arranged a " tournée " for me with a view to greater comfort and less wear and tear. In the year 1873 I sang in no less than forty-seven different places on the Continent, meeting a good many eminent people, and also making acquaintances which were destined to develop into lifelong friendships. At Halle, for instance, the birthplace of Handel,

the young lady who, in that year, sang the contralto part in the *Messiah* with myself in the bass part, was Auguste Redeker, the lovely singer who a few years later enchanted all London with her beautiful voice and charming presence, and afterwards became the wife of Dr., now Sir, Felix Semon.

V

In the year 1874 I reached a rather important point in my career. I got my first engagement for one of the famous Nether-Rhenish Music Festivals, then the great musical events of the year in Germany, or, I might say, in the world, for to those festivals people from all over the world would flock in great numbers.

Smaller places, with their limited means, musical and financial, being then unable to produce great choral and orchestral works in an anything like adequate manner, the privilege of such artistic achievements was reserved to the towns of Cologne, Düsseldorf, and Aix-la-Chapelle. Throughout the Rhine district, then considered to be the most musical part of Germany, the local choral and orchestral societies joined their forces to those of Cologne, Düsseldorf, or Aix-la-Chapelle, as the case might be, to hold a feast of music every year in one of these three towns in rotation during the Whitsun holidays.

In 1874 the turn was Cologne's, and with no

little pride and hardly less anxiety I saw my name announced for the first time in a list of soloists comprising some of the most renowned of the day. But above all, *Brahms* was to be there.

For weeks beforehand my mind was occupied with the thought of seeing face to face the great composer whose name was then on every musician's lips as that of the man whose genius Robert Schumann had publicly proclaimed in the glowing language of an inspired prophet. And I well remember my embarrassment, and the sensation it gave me, when at last I was permitted to shake hands with him after the rehearsal of Handel's *Samson*, in which oratorio I had been engaged to sing the part of "Harapha." A few kind and encouraging words soon put me at my ease, and I could give myself up to scrutinising Brahms' personal appearance.

He was broad-chested, of somewhat short stature, with a tendency to stoutness. His face was then clean shaven, revealing a rather thick, genial underlip; the healthy and ruddy colour of his skin indicated a love of nature and a habit of being in the open air in all kinds of weather; his thick straight hair of brownish colour came nearly down to his shoulders. His clothes and boots were not exactly of the latest pattern, nor did they fit particularly well, but his linen was spotless.

What, however, struck me most was the kindliness of his eyes. They were of a light blue; wonderfully keen and bright, with now and then a roguish twinkle in them, and yet at times of almost childlike tenderness. Soon I was to find out that that roguish twinkle in his eyes corresponded to a quality in his nature which would perhaps be best described as good-natured sarcasm. A few illustrations will explain what I mean. A rather celebrated composer had asked Brahms to be allowed to play to him from the MS. his latest composition, a violin concerto. Brahms consented to hear it and seated himself near the piano. Mr. —— played his work with great enthusiasm and force, the perspiration—it was a very warm day—streaming down his face.

When he had finished, Brahms got up, approached the piano, took a sheet of the manuscript between his thumb and middle finger and, rubbing it between them, exclaimed, "I say, where do you buy your music paper? First rate!"

In the evening of the day of our first meeting I found myself sitting with Brahms in a *Kneipe* —one of those cosy restaurants, redolent of the mixed perfumes of beer, wine, tobacco, coffee, and food, so dear to Germans in general, and to German artists in particular—in the

company of four or five prominent composers of the day, who had come from their different places of abode to attend the festival.

The musical proceedings of the day had been the chief topic of conversation (on one of the programmes there had figured some new songs of mine), when suddenly one of the "Herren Kapellmeister," pointing toward me, exclaimed, "Now just look at that lucky fellow Henschel! He can both sing and compose, and *we*"—describing with his hand a circle which included Brahms—"we can compose only."

"*And not even that*" Brahms instantly added, his countenance bearing the expression of the most perfect innocence.

He was very fond of sitting with good friends over his beer or wine or his beloved "Kaffee"—with the accent, after Viennese fashion, on the last syllable—in the *Kneipe* till the small hours of the morning. After the *Samson* performance our party did not break up until half-past two in the morning. To sit late at night in a stuffy room full of tobacco smoke, for hours at a stretch, and that between two public appearances, is not precisely a proceeding I could conscientiously recommend a young singer to imitate; but on that occasion nothing would have induced me to leave the room before Brahms, so fascinated was I by his

personality, so jealous of every minute of his company.

Moreover, there were, besides Brahms, other interesting and renowned men sitting around that social table, like splendid old Gevaert, the Director of the Brussels Conservatory of Music, whose fine Flemish face looked as if cut out of Rembrandt's "Syndics"; Kufferath, another Brussels musician of fame; the jovial Ferdinand Hiller of Cologne, Joseph Joachim, Carl Reinthaler of Bremen, Julius Otto Grimm of Münster, Wasielewsky of Bonn, the biographer of Schumann. I hope I was duly appreciative of the privilege of being in the company of such men.

Altogether I had every reason to be satisfied with my first experience at one of those big music festivals, which augured well for the future, and it was a happy summer I spent that year, partly with my people and friends in the Thuringian woods, partly in the Austrian alps, with the Joachims, who, in the happy temporary possession of a charming little villa in Alt-Aussee in Styria, had suggested to me the taking of rooms somewhere near them, so that we could make excursions together, and now and then some music as well.

I do not know which I enjoyed more: a day's wanderings with the great musician, often

starting at five o'clock in the morning,—he was an excellent walker—roaming on the tops of the hills surrounding the picturesque village, or accompanying on the piano, his playing of his own Hungarian Concerto and those of Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Spohr, and sonatas by Locatelli, Tartini, Handel—he practised every day for some time — or singing with Frau Joachim songs and duets for hours at a time. Little did I then think that what appeared to me—and everybody—an ideal union between two fine artists would, only a few years later, end in cruel estrangement and final separation.

Of Joachim's exceeding good-naturedness—I use the adjective advisedly—Brahms, in later years, told me a story which at the same time rather interestingly illustrates a phase in the life, toward the middle of last century, at the Court of Hanover, where Joachim, from 1853 to 1866, occupied the post of Concert-Director and Solo-Violinist to the King. Among his duties as such was also that of engaging the artists for and arranging the programmes of the musical soirées which at regular intervals took place at the Royal Castle. King George was one of the last of those monarchs who believed in the " right divine of Kings " to such an extent that, for instance, if he would say a thing was red though it really was green, it

was red. Blind as he was, he is known to have, at exhibitions, admired pictures before which he had been led by his attendant, pointing out details of which he had been informed beforehand, and trying to make people believe he could see.

For one of those musical evenings at the Castle, Joachim's choice of an assisting artist had fallen on Moritz Hauptmann,[1] who was asked to come over from Leipsic and play with him some of his chamber-music. On the morning of the day of the concert the King sent for Joachim, who, as usual, had to prepare His Majesty for the events of the evening by telling him who was coming and what the programme was to be. On being informed of Hauptmann's participation in that night's musical proceedings, the King asked who that gentleman was, having never heard of him before. Joachim then spoke with great warmth of Hauptmann's compositions, making special mention of a Sonata in G, with a particularly charming Adagio which he proposed playing with the composer.

Imagine Joachim's feelings when in the evening, as he presented Hauptmann to the King, he had to hear His Majesty say to the

[1] Hauptmann was a composer, rather dry and academical, and up to his death, in 1868, cantor of the church of St. Thomas in Leipsic.

delighted composer: "Ah, my dear Mr. Hauptmann, I am so glad to make your personal acquaintance. . . . I have always been a great admirer of your excellent compositions. . . . There is especially a Sonata . . . I think it is in G . . . which I am particularly devoted to. . . . Such a lovely Adagio . . . Joachim must always play it twice to me; isn't that so, Joachim?" Of course, poor Joachim not only had to bow his assent, for the King could not have seen that, but audibly to express it! That night he came back to Brahms, who happened to be his guest for a few days, hot with rage and indignation, and determined to make an end to a position which could subject him to such degrading indignities. The following morning he actually sent his resignation to the King, as he had done—so Brahms told me—two or three times before, after similar experiences, but once more His Majesty, by saying charming things to him, appeased his anger and made him retract his decision.

Thuringian Woods and Austrian Alps had well prepared me physically for the strenuous winter season that lay before me, and which rather auspiciously commenced in October with a soirée by Joachim, Heinrich Barth, then Professor of the Piano at the Royal Hochschule, and myself, at the New Palace in Potsdam, the

residence of the Crown Prince, afterwards the Emperor Frederick.

To come into personal contact with that popular favourite "Our Fritz," one of the most perfect specimens of manhood imaginable, and his Consort, the first member of the English Royal family it had been my good fortune to meet, was a matter of no small delight to me. I was particularly impressed by the simple, affable way in which the Royal hosts mingled with their guests, and the Crown Prince's jovial manner emboldened me, after the supper which followed the concert, to approach him on the subject of a mission I had from an old friend in Hamburg, that proud old free city which after the Franco-Prussian War had become part of the German Empire.

The lady, an elderly spinster, was an enthusiastic admirer of the old Emperor William, and "dying" to knit a dozen woollen stockings for His Majesty, if she could get permission and—a sample stocking to ensure their being of the right size. With the boldness of youth I submitted the lady's desire to the Crown Prince, who laughingly promised to have the matter attended to; and within the week, to my joy no less than that of the patriotic lady of Hamburg, a parcel arrived for me from the New Palace, containing the coveted treasure—

an old pair of Emperor William's stockings, long white cotton stockings, marked with a red "W" surmounted by the Royal Crown, and—touching and incredible—darned in three places! I have got that pair of stockings now, and perhaps some day, in a glass case at some German museum, it may yet serve to turn a degenerate people back to the simple life!

An opportunity of thanking His Royal Highness personally for his kindness presented itself soon, for the Emperor had commanded a morning performance of Handel's *Hercules*, under Joachim, to take place at the White Hall of the Royal Castle in Berlin, with the Chorus of the Royal High School of Music, which was still in its early youth then, and in which the Emperor took a great personal interest. The performance, in which Mme. Joachim took the part of Dejanira and I that of her ill-fated lord, was a very interesting occasion, the audience consisting only of the Emperor, the Crown Prince and Princess, and some generals and Court officials with their wives. The Emperor seemed much pleased, and at the end had all the soloists presented to him. This was the only time I personally met that aged monarch, and the kind and sweet expression in the dear old fatherly face made a deep impression on me.

During Hercules' rather pompous Aria:

Mein Name wird in allen Zeiten
Hell im Glanz der Ehre stehn

(My name will stand for all times, shining
Lustrous bright in honour's glow)

I thought I noticed a merry smile on the Crown Prince's face, and after the performance he said to me: "You know, when you sang 'in allen Zeiten' (for all times), I kept hearing 'in allen Zeitungen'" (in all the newspapers!) He seemed always ready for a good joke.

In the early spring of the following year (1875) I met Brahms again. Some letters had passed between us, relating to my singing for the Society of the Friends of Music at Vienna, of whose concerts Brahms, at that time, was the conductor. I had been engaged to sing the part of Christ in Bach's *Passion according to St. Matthew*, and that of Odysseus in Max Bruch's secular oratorio of that name; and it may be imagined how great an inspiration it was for a young musician like myself to sing under the direction of Brahms and to be in daily and intimate intercourse with him, in anticipation of which privilege I had made arrangements for a prolonged stay in the Austrian capital. We went for a walk together every day, mostly in the Prater, the favourite out-of-door resort of the Viennese, and it seemed a matter of no small gratification to

Brahms to find himself recognized and deferentially greeted wherever we happened to drop in for an occasional rest.

The numerous public gardens where Gipsy bands played, especially attracted us, and it was a delight to notice the increased spirit those brown sons of the Puszta put into their music in the presence of the master who had done so much toward opening up to their beloved tunes a wider sphere of popularity.

The first of the two concerts mentioned above went off beautifully. Brahms had trained the Chorus with infinite care and conducted with great earnestness.

It was a rare delight to watch the enthusiasm and, at the same time, the reverence and dignity he brought to bear on the performance of Bach's masterwork. Johann Sebastian was one of his gods, and I remember one day in his rooms when, seeing me notice that master's *Well-tempered Klavier* open on the piano, he said to me: "With this I rinse my mouth every morning."

The time between the performances of Bach's *Passion* and Bruch's *Odysseus* was filled up by my first visit to Russia, whither I had been invited to sing Handel's *Messiah*, in German, under the conductorship of Davidoff, the great violoncello-player, who was then Director of

the Imperial Conservatory of Music. Needless to say, I undertook the long journey, *via* Warsaw, with no little expectation; and the utterly different way of life there in nearly all of its aspects did indeed not disappoint, though it thoroughly bewildered me. I do not know what I should have done had I not been met at Petrograd Station by old Professor Homilius, one of the directors of the "Sing-Akademie," at whose concert I was to make my first appearance. In the vast place outside the station, hundreds of tiny little narrow open cabs, "isvostchiks," were standing abreast in long rows in the snow, their drivers picturesque in high boots and long dark blue caftans, under which, to judge from the portliness of their figures, and their ample waists, girded by broad scarlet scarfs, they seemed to have half-a-dozen other garments. They all were shouting at the top of their voices to attract attention to the particular beauty and swiftness of their beasts, and soliciting patronage. There is — or at any rate was then — no regular tariff for the use of these vehicles. You have to make a bargain each time, but it is after having secured your conveyance, and being more or less comfortably ensconced in the fur-coverings, that your real difficulties commence. Unless you

wish to be driven to one of the public buildings, or to a house in one of the most famous thoroughfares, the ignorant driver depends entirely on your giving him the directions, which you are supposed to shout to him at every doubtful turning, so that I cannot see how any one without a knowledge of at least the two words *naprava* (right), or *nalyeva* (left), and a partial familiarity with the map of the town, can ever hope to get to his destination.

Failure, however, to reach it would certainly not be the fault of the horses, which as a rule are very swift. I was told by my cicerone that the rapid speed at which Russians delight to travel in their carriages reduces the life of their horses to about one-fourth of its natural duration. There is, for instance, a rich banker, he told me, who saves himself the trouble of giving his coachmen notice by engaging them invariably with the understanding that the moment they allow another carriage to pass his they must consider themselves dismissed!

There is something barbaric about this, as altogether about the life of a wealthy Russian at home. Vast houses, often more like palaces; vast halls pervaded by a sweet scent as of incense; wide, richly-carpeted staircases; huge porcelain stoves giving out a most gratifying warmth; gorgeously uniformed major-domos

with sticks like those of a drum-major; an army of liveried servants; gigantic vases in malachite, lapis lazuli, and bronze; marble statuary—I was quite staggered by all this display of wealth, comfort, ease, and luxury, and, indeed, throughout my visit I seemed to be living in a sort of dreamland, it was all so strange.

The only time in my life when I ate a dinner off solid gold plate was at the house of General Count Paul Schuvaloff, who then occupied a high position at the Imperial Court—a most charming man and an excellent musician. One does not often see a general in his uniform play the 'cello, as Count Schuvaloff frequently did during my visits at his house; whilst another uniformed officer, Lieut.-Colonel César Cui, a composer of great merit, whose works were at that time very popular in concert-room and opera house, accompanied him on the piano.

The performance of the *Messiah* went off very well. I was in capital form and—rather strange to our ideas of an oratorio audience's attitude—had to repeat the air "Why do the Nations." Rubinstein, Leschetitsky, Mme. Essipoff, Louis Brassin, Leopold Auer, Helmy Raab, the charming Prima Donna of the Imperial Opera—all friends and colleagues of Davidoff, who conducted—were present, and

we all met again on the following night at Leschetitsky's house, Mme. Essipoff receiving the company. These weekly receptions in the salons of the famous pianist and teacher were among the fashionable events of the season.

Imperial Highnesses, ambassadors, generals, University professors loved to mix in Bohemian fashion with long-haired virtuosos and operatic favourites, and sometimes at two o'clock in the morning Rubinstein, Auer, and Davidoff—a wonderful trio—would sit down to play, or Leschetitsky and Essipoff delight their hearers with a duet for two pianos. To drive home in an open "isvostchik" at four or five o'clock in the morning was by no means an unusual occurrence. Somehow or other the life in Russia had a peculiar fascination for me, and I always looked forward to my visits there, which, though not unfrequent during the following ten years, were never of too long duration; and that, considering the delight Russians take in turning night into day, was a good thing.

Nicolai Rubinstein, also a pianist and hardly inferior as a virtuoso to his more famous elder brother Anton, by some even preferred to him on the point of mere technique, which, indeed, was stupendous, held at that time the position of Director of the Moscow Conservatoire of

Music. And it was in Moscow that I first met Tschaikovsky, a most amiable, kind, gentle, modest man, with just that touch of melancholy in his composition which to me seems to be a characteristic of the Russian. I spent a week in Moscow, singing, among other things, in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, in Russian, a language which in my opinion, as regards melodiousness, comes immediately after the Italian. Nicolai Rubinstein conducted an excellent performance, and afterwards he, Tschaikovsky, and I had supper at the famous restaurant known as the "Érémitage." There we sat until the small hours of the morning, talking mostly about music. Brahms' German Requiem had only just been published, and, much to my astonishment and distress, both Rubinstein and Tschaikovsky expressed in very strong terms their resentment of the title "German Requiem," maintaining that it implied a certain arrogance on the part of the composer as hinting at the superiority of German over other music. I argued that the word "Requiem" as applied to a work of music, generally meant a setting of the old accepted Latin words of the Mass for the Dead. Brahms in calling his work "A German Requiem" merely wanted to make it clear, already on the title-page, that his work was not a Mass, but set to

German words taken from different parts of the Bible; that, if those words were translated into, say, Swedish or French or Russian, it would become a Swedish, French, or Russian Requiem; that nothing could have been further from Brahms' intention than a slight on the music of other nations. But I am afraid when we parted early in the morning the two were still far from convinced.

During my subsequent visits to Petrograd I chiefly gave recitals of songs, many of them by Russian composers, which I sang in the original. I learned the meaning of every word of a song, and a very nice young lawyer, Ivan Ivanovitch, coached me in the pronunciation, which, owing not unlikely to the portion of Polish blood in my veins, came comparatively easy to me. I had been told of the generous enthusiasm of Petrograd audiences, and how it often materializes in the shape of a valuable present, so that, for instance, it is not at all unusual for officers of a "crack" regiment to club together and throw to a foreign prima donna, singing at the opera house as a guest, and who may have been fortunate enough to captivate their ears and hearts, a diamond bracelet or some other precious piece of jewellery, hidden in a bouquet of flowers, across the footlights.

And sure enough, when I returned to Germany after my second visit, my valise was considerably the heavier for containing several silver and gold cigarette-cases and match-boxes, a silver tankard, a silver bowl, a scarfpin, and other presents given to me by people I hardly knew.

The Russians' love of music is very great and their way of showing their appreciation sometimes very touching. I shall never forget a charming incident after the last recital of my second season in Petrograd.

That young lawyer, Ivan Ivanovitch, whom I frequently met at the Davidoffs and other houses, was an enthusiastic lover of music, especially vocal, and himself a very acceptable amateur tenor. Unfortunately he spoke neither French nor German nor Italian, the only German word he knew being, by some chance, the word "gegenüber" (*vis-à-vis*); and I being unable to converse in *his* tongue, we could only communicate—I was very fond of him—by facial expression or through a friendly interpreter. After the recital, at the end of which I had to sing half-a-dozen more songs than were on the programme, a great number of people crowded into the artists' room, shaking hands, congratulating me, and—I was to leave the following morning—wishing me

bon voyage. Among them was my friend Ivan Ivanovitch. Looking at me beseechingly, and evidently greatly distressed at being unable to talk to me, a tear running down his cheek, he took my hand into both of his, pressed it most earnestly and affectionately until at last, choked with emotion and addressing me by my name in Russian, he burst out into " Youri Yakovlevitch," and then the single word, " geggenüber ! ! " (as he pronounced it).

. . . . . .

Among my newly-acquired Russian friends I was particularly lucky in counting one, a physician, whose brother-in-law held the post of Master of the Hunt to the Czar; for through this gentleman's influence I was allowed the rare privilege of visiting the Imperial kennels at Gatchina, one of His Majesty's residences, not far from Petrograd. My friend himself was the fortunate owner of a country place in that neighbourhood, and thither he had promised to take me one day, to spend a few hours, in gratification of my wish to see something of the country and Russian peasant life. It was a perfect winter's day, and the scene on alighting at the little station lovely beyond description. In contrast to the streets of the city, in the dirty-grey surface of which the heavy and constant traffic makes it almost

impossible to recognize so pure and beautiful a thing as snow, here the landscape was a glorious symphony in whites, dark-greens, and browns. The wide semicircle skirting a grove of fine fir trees at the back of the station was covered with virgin snow glittering in the bright sunshine, and there, against this exquisite background, waiting for us and looking like a new toy magnified, stood a beautiful "troika" from the Czar's establishment.

Even with an utter ignorance of the Russian language it will not be difficult to guess that the word "troika" has something to do with the number three. This most picturesque equipage derives its name from the three horses which are in use with the vehicle, not so much because of its weight, which indeed is so slight that an average boy in the shafts could pull the thing with ease, but merely for greater speed, a maximum of which is secured by the peculiar way in which the horses are hitched and harnessed, one in the shafts, the two bars of which, just about in the middle of their length, are connected by a high arch widening at the top, the two others outside, with their heads slightly forced downwards and turned, the near horse's to the left, the off horse's to the right, with the result that whilst the middle horse trots, or rather paces—for nearly all Russian

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carriage-horses move the fore- and hind-legs of the same side in the same direction—the two outside ones, except when walking, *must* gallop, poor things. This may appear just a little cruel, but I really think the horses being broken in in that way when very young, are accustomed to it from the first, and, to judge from their behaviour at full speed, seem to rather like it. Moreover, the tightness is of course relaxed when they are standing for any length of time.

The three dapple-greys—magnificent creatures, sleek-coated, long-tailed and long-necked —on seeing us approach and greet their master, who in a very becoming dark-green uniform stood by them, turned their fine heads toward us—I do so like the absence of blinkers on Russian horses — and by stamping the ground and champing their bits, which caused the little silver bells hanging from the centre of the arch over the shafts to make short, harmonious little sounds, commenced to show their impatience to be off. This we were now without delay, and no one who has not sped at the rate of about three minutes a mile over frozen, snow-covered ground in a small sleigh drawn by three big horses through Russian plains on a bright, sunny day, can realize the tremendous exhilaration of it. After a little under an hour's drive—a never-to-be-forgotten

experience—we reached the little village of which my friend's house was, so to speak, "The Hall." Before the thatched hut of an old retainer we stopped. He had been notified of our intention to partake of luncheon there, and now stepped out of the door, a splendid fellow of about thirty-five. He was in holiday attire and, most deferentially greeting us, though with the dignity of a nobleman, bade us welcome in words—beautifully chosen and even poetical—which my friend translated to me, adding that the Russian language hardly knows such a thing as dialect, and that this man's Russian was as good as his own. On entering the cottage we found in the large, warm, cosy room the wife and two children, evidently freshly dressed for the occasion and looking exceedingly charming in the picturesque national costume. Happy to see my friend whom they seemed to adore,—I afterwards learned he had as their friend and physician been ever kind and helpful to them,—they reverently kissed his hands; whilst the patriarchal old grandfather, who had risen from his place by the hearth, a fine tall man, his white, straight hair coming down to his shoulders and his grey beard flowing in long curls almost to the belt of his gaberdine, fell flat on the ground before my friend, kissing the hem of his fur coat.

I had never seen anything like this before, and was greatly impressed by the unwonted scene, as indeed by all that followed. Whilst my friend talked with the men and the children, and I had a good look round, the housewife began laying the table, distributing on the cloth, snow-white, with red embroidered edges, the plates and napkins, knives, forks, spoons, tumblers, salt-cellars, indeed every requisite of a perfectly served meal. I could not detect anything soiled or broken. The older of the children, a handsome maiden of about fourteen, brought a large earthen jug with "kwast," a sort of home-brewed, very palatable light beer, and after we had sat down, the husband beckoned—again in a most dignified manner—to his wife to bring in the food. First came, in a steaming bowl, the soup, called "borsht," made of beet-root and cream, into which you put a spoonful of mashed potatoes, which is handed round separately, an excellent concoction; and now followed the *pièce de résistance*—my friend had already prepared me for these national delicacies—on a huge platter: a large, oblong cake of breadstuff, nice and brown on the outside, and containing a big fish baked whole in it with spices and kale which proved, as the soup had before, a most savoury dish. The sweet, too, which ended the sumptuous and highly

appreciated repast, was a Russian speciality. My friend had evidently wished to let me experience a true Russian day, and certainly succeeded even beyond his own designs, for, as chance would have it, soon after our meal, it happening to be the name-day of some local saint, a priest appeared on his round through the village to bless the ikons, of which there is found at least one in every house, with a lamp, burning vegetable oil, perpetually alight before it. After the benediction had been pronounced, our host poured into a tumbler a quantity of raw vodka, one-fiftieth part of which would have sent me reeling. Imagine my astonishment on seeing the pope draining it at one fell swoop without turning a hair. Of course I thought of the number of huts still remaining to be visited by the godly man, and wondered who, after the last imbibition, would escort this six-foot-two and corresponding girth home, and how many people it would require; but, will you believe it, an hour later, when our "troika" was carrying us back to Gatchina, we met that self-same man coming out of one of the huts, erect and lusty, walking as straight as an arrow, and apparently not a whit the worse for his many blessings. A kitten may remind one of a lion, and years afterwards, in the Scottish Highlands, this wonderful performance

was recalled to my mind, the scene being the drawing-room of the Manse of Alvey[1] in Inverness-shire, which we had taken for some consecutive summers in the early 'nineties. A presentation was to be made to us on behalf of the parishioners, consisting of two charming water-colour paintings of Loch-an-Eilean, by those excellent artists, Edith and Gertrud Martineau, and an "overflow"—for the daughter—in the shape of a silver card-case.

What inspired the graceful act I cannot say, except it be the overkindness of the good people of Alvey. It was in the forenoon that the little deputation of four or five prominent parishioners, headed by the minister, all dressed in their best Sunday black, made their appearance. The minister's address of presentation had been followed by my little speech of thanks, after which I went from friend to friend pouring into his tumbler the liquid refreshment in general use at baptisms, marriages, and burials, followed by my daughter with the water-jug. Every one meekly submitted to her ministrations—also a sort of baptism—until she came to the joiner of Lagganlia, who with a gentle wave of his hand held her off, and, shaking his grey

[1] Generally spelled Alv*ie*; but my excellent old friend the late Rev. James Anderson, minister of the Parish, had ever been anxious to see the old historical spelling restored.

elder's head, said, "Naw, naw—thank ye—a can hae water at hame!"

He was then sixty-seven, and only the other day, twenty years later, the dear old man sat, facing a terrible March storm, on the box-seat of the hearse that carried the remains of his guid wife to the kirkyard, two miles away from the home where he is now contentedly waiting to "slip awa'" himself.

From a Scottish manse to the Imperial kennels at Gatchina is a far cry, though the connecting link might well be the dogs found in both. Sped on our way by the hand-waved blessings of the vodka-proof priest, we soon found ourselves stopping at the entrance to the kennels, where we were received by a very aged man, tall—the average height of the Russian man struck me as altogether very considerable—and splendidly erect in spite of his age. He was the keeper of the hounds, and at once proceeded to conduct us through what, but for the absence of furniture, seemed more like a succession of drawing-rooms than kennels. The hounds were nearly all of the famous wolf-hound breed. In the first room, beautifully light and airy, two of them, the Czar's personal favourites, were actually reposing on large, soft red velvet cushions, the most perfectly shaped dogs I had ever seen: spotlessly

snow-white, with long-haired, silky coats, their narrow and very long heads finely modelled, as if chiselled out of marble. The old man told us the bones of these animals are exceedingly delicate, those of the head especially so, indeed thin to such an extent that it had actually happened on one occasion that two of them had in the excitement of the chase run into each other at full speed, and, unfortunately knocking their heads together, both fallen dead on the spot, with their skulls broken. There were between fifty and sixty of these lovely creatures in this dogs' palace, each in his or her own bunk, with their names above it. After feasting our eyes on their beauty, the keeper now took out a bunch of keys, and, bidding us follow, prepared us for "a fearful sight." At the end of a little lane in the woods adjoining the kennels we came to a little wooden hut, the door of which led to an enclosure with another door. This our guide unlocked, and on its being opened we beheld, inside a cage formed of very substantial iron bars such as are used in zoological gardens, the fiercest-looking dog imaginable, a bull-dog, dark coated, not particularly large, but broader chested than I had ever believed any dog capable of being. The distance between his short but wonderfully muscular front-legs must

have been fully fifteen inches. With his large white teeth showing under his short black squat nose, in spite of his mouth being closed, and a head equalling in size the reputed three of that amiable guardian of the entrance to Hades, he looked a veritable Cerberus. This was His Majesty's own particular bear-dog, a species bred purposely for bear-hunting. We were told that this animal would tackle the largest bear, not only without fear but with absolute certainty of success, by jumping on, and imbedding his mighty fangs in the bear's neck. Nothing that poor beast can contrive to free himself is of avail; even rolling on the ground will not shake off the dog, which holds his prey as in a vice. A last frantic effort usually enables the bear to get up on his hind-legs, and during such a moment the Emperor approaches the animal, and with a vigorous thrust of the large knife finishes him.

VI

But to return to Vienna where, it will be remembered, I was due to sing in Bruch's *Odysseus*. April 18, 1876 was the date of the performance, historical because of its being the last conducted by Brahms in his capacity as Musical Director of the Society of the Friends of Music, the only official post he has ever held. It took place in the forenoon, and was followed by the solemn ceremony of presenting Brahms with an illuminated address of Farewell, acknowledging his great achievements as conductor of the society, and expressing the society's and the chorus's regret at his resignation.

A local celebrity, rather naughtily styled by Brahms " The poet of the inner town " (Vienna is divided into a number of postal districts radiating from the central one, No. 1, which is called the inner town), delivered a very eulogistic oration, which Brahms, who could hardly disguise his being considerably bored, merely acknowledged with a painfully curt " Thank

you very much." Then he took under his arm the folio containing the address and walked away. He afterwards told me that such official proceedings were exceedingly distasteful to him.

Far more to his liking was the supper at one of the leading hotels, to which, on the evening of that day, a great many of his friends sat down to honour him, and which the presence of ladies made all the more acceptable to the guest of the evening.

The memory of the anniversary of Beethoven's death (March 26) in that year will never fade from my mind, since it was my great privilege to spend part of the day with Brahms in the very chamber in which the great composer had died. Common friends of ours were then living in the suite of rooms once occupied by Beethoven in the Schwarz-Spanierhaus. From the corner of the room in which Beethoven's bed had stood, his bust, adorned with a laurel wreath, looked down upon us, and though nearly half a century had passed away since that historical thunderstorm during which the immortal soul of the Titan had freed itself from its earthly fetters, so deeply were we impressed by the solemnity of the memory, that when, after a long silence, we began to speak again, we did so in subdued whispers only until

we found ourselves outside again among the stirring crowd of the lively Viennese.

Soon after those beautiful days I was due at Düsseldorf, the scene of that year's Musical Festival. The first performance there, under Joachim's direction, of Handel's oratorio *Hercules* had attracted a good many Englishmen, among them Mr., afterwards Sir George Grove and Walter Broadwood, in whose most genial company I repeatedly found myself during the Festival, and who were responsible for my first thought of England as a possible field for my future activity. A rather amusing thing happened in connection with that first festival performance of *Hercules*. An enterprising German publisher, rightly anticipating a demand for vocal scores of that fine oratorio, had prepared and published a new German edition of it. In his desire to be as authentic as possible he had taken hold of an old English copy of the work, the title of which happened to read "*Handel's Oratorio Hercules in Score.*" There being, as is often the case, no punctuation on the title-page, our friend, whose English must have been on a par with his geography, remembering, perhaps, Gluck's *Iphigenia in Tauris*, or maybe recollecting having read of "Flagranti," that Italian place, he supposed, where so many refugees from justice are caught

every year, and which he could not find on the map either, evidently took it for granted that "Score," pronounced in two syllables, "Sco-re," was another of those out-of-the-way places of ancient history or mythology, and confidently sent his volume into the world with the strikingly original title "*Hercules in Score, Oratorium von Händel.*"

The Düsseldorf Festival was followed, in June, by one at Kiel, the first, if I am not mistaken, ever held in the north of Germany, with Joachim as conductor-in-chief. One of the days, the 28th, being Joachim's birthday, there were special "goings on" after the concert that night. The banquet was rendered particularly interesting by the presence—quite a rare event then—of an admiral of the United States Navy and his officers, whose ships were anchored in the roadstead off Düsternbrook. After that we younger people, with the glow of fresh successes on our cheeks, and the dream of eternal youth in our hearts, joined by a number of students from the University, poured out into the large and beautiful garden surrounding the "Fest Halle." Here and there a soft light from a tiny little coloured glass cup peeped invitingly through the dark groves; the night was cool and lovely; above us the starry heavens, around us, in the bushes, the

nightingales seemed to burst their little throats in the ecstasy of song—was it a wonder we could not tear ourselves away, nor even think of sleep? The dawn was breaking before we knew it, and between four and five that morning some young men could be seen in a boat rowing out to Düsternbrook, there, by a plunge into the glorious sea, to end what in after years I always remembered as and identified with "The lovely night of June," whenever I heard poor Goring-Thomas' charming song.

If this was the only instance I can recall when, apart from railway journeys, I had deliberately abstained from spending the night in the orthodox manner, viz. in bed, the end of the year provided me with another unique experience, though of a somewhat different character, the scene being the brilliantly lighted studio of the Hungarian painter, Count Zichy, in Paris, and the occasion a no less interesting one than an improvised spiritualistic séance.

After a capital performance of Mendelssohn's *L'Élie* in Brussels on the 26th of December, at which the King and Queen and the Countess of Flanders were present, I went to Paris for a few days' holiday. I had letters to Count Zichy, and his more famous compatriot and fellow-artist Muncacszi, and one evening at

the former's house I met at dinner Muncacszi, Madame Essipoff, and a young, strange-looking Polish lady with short hair, like a young man's, whose name I have forgotten, who, I afterwards learned, was a "Medium."

Dinner over, during which Muncacszi had emphatically declared his utter disbelief in spirits and supernatural manifestations, it was proposed to have a test. In the middle of the huge, lofty studio, where we found ourselves after dinner, there stood, on four massive legs, a large, heavy, solid oak table which it would have taken two strong men to lift as much as an inch. This table it was decided to try, by forming a chain of hands on its top, to move, or rather make to move by itself. We had each of us to give our word of honour to Muncacszi not to do anything whatever beyond keeping our hands quietly on the table, not to try any pressure, or to hasten the accomplishment of the task by help of our feet, but to treat the matter as a really serious one. So the thing commenced. We were now all standing around the table, our bodies at least a foot away from it, only our hands, spread out, gently resting on the top, the thumbs of each participant meeting, and the little fingers touching those of her or his neighbour. For fully ten minutes there was no speaking, no sound and—no sign,

and the sceptics looked triumphant. Then, once in a while, some of us seemed to feel a sort of throbbing pulsation as it were in the table, occasioning a quickly suppressed exclamation. Gradually, however, there could be no doubt that something was happening or going to happen. Muncacszi grew excited, made us swear by all that was dear to us that we were not doing anything. Soon there came a decided swaying movement on the part of the table, and now we others, too, could not disguise our growing excitement. We called out to each other, never, however, breaking the chain of hands: "*Did you feel this?*"—"*It's you that's doing it!*"—"*No, upon my honour!*"—"*Truly!*"—"*Swear to me!*" All the while the table was now moving quicker and quicker round and round, we, always without letting go of it, trying to move with it, which, however, grew more and more difficult, until after a while this huge piece of furniture actually danced about all over the room like mad, mostly a little above the floor, until, commencing to get exhausted with the violent exercise, we had to withdraw our hold when, the chain of hands being broken, the thing dropped on to its feet with a heavy thud, like one dead. Naturally it took us quite a while to recover our mental equilibrium. Poor Muncacszi was the last

to get over the effects of this certainly strange, though perhaps physically explicable, experience.

Early the following year I was invited to sing at the annual "Caecilien-Fest" at Münster in Westphalia. There, in that quaint old town, famous for what would have been the great comedy of the Anabaptists but for the excessively cruel punishment meted out to the leaders of those poor deluded fanatics, and of which a ghastly relic was at that time still visible in the shape of an iron cage containing the bleached skeleton of one of the chief actors hanging from the spire of the Minster, Julius Otto Grimm and Richard Barth had by their zeal and enthusiasm created a musical atmosphere second to none in Germany, and to be called to one of those St. Cecilia Festivals as a soloist was a much-coveted privilege. Grimm, a German Russian, *i.e.* a native of the Baltic provinces, was a musician of the first order, and, more than that, one of the kindest, simplest, most lovable of men, cultured beyond the common and of a refreshing, contagious enthusiasm for his art. He was on terms of intimate friendship with Brahms who, like everybody else, loved to come to these charming feasts of music and, on this occasion, was to play his D Minor Concerto for Piano-

forte—the one in B flat was not written then—and to conduct his *Triumphal Hymn.*

Richard Barth, an excellent musician, pianist, composer, and violinist, Grimm's right hand, was an extraordinary young man, who in after years amply fulfilled the promise he then gave, for from Münster he was called as Professor and Music director to the University of Marburg, which a few years later made him a doctor *honoris causa* of Philosophy. From there he went to Hamburg where after, for a period of ten years, conducting the Philharmonic concerts, he now lives as Conductor of the Singakademie and director of the Conservatory of Music. When I called him Grimm's "right hand" I should really have said "left hand" for, gratifying as honours and positions doubtless are, there will always be worthy people to achieve and fill them; but I doubt if there lives, or ever lived, another violinist who, though not left-handed from birth, fingers with his right hand and bows with his left as Richard Barth does. How he came to do it will, I am sure, as an illustration of what enthusiasm and perseverance can accomplish, be considered worth recording. Born into a musical family, young Richard was given his first little fiddle at the age of three. He soon exhibited a decided talent for

the instrument, when, hardly a year later, the boy accidentally severed one of the sinews of the middle finger of his left hand by a cut with a knife. As at that time—1854—surgery was still very far from the marvellous achievements of the present time, the finger healed badly and remained stiff, and there would have been an end to fiddling for the little fellow. So great, however, was his love for his instrument, so keen his disappointment, that his grandfather, himself a good musician, one day conceived the idea of restringing the fiddle in the reversed order, and placing it into the delighted boy's right hand, gave him the bow into the left, with the result that in a very short time Richard had regained the skill he had acquired before the accident, and in time became a violinist of the first rank and the leader of Grimm's orchestra.

I arrived at Grimm's house a few days previous to the festival, at which, among other things, I was to sing the baritone solo in Brahms' *Triumphal Hymn*, and, much to my disgust, just a few days before the concert, caught a cold which made me dread that high F in the solo " And behold now, the heavens opened wide." I asked Brahms if he would object to my altering that note into a more convenient one, on account of that cold, and he said :

"Not in the least. As far as I am concerned, a thinking, sensible singer may, without hesitation, change a note which for some reason or other is for the time being out of his compass, into one which he can reach with comfort, *provided always the declamation remains correct and the accentuation does not suffer.*"

At the concert Brahms played his concerto superbly. I especially noted his emphasizing each of those tremendous shakes in the first movement by placing a short rest between the last note of one and the first small note before the next. During those short stops he would lift his hands up high and let them come down on the keys with a force like that of a lion's paw. It was grand.

"Isegrim"—for by that sobriquet, the poetical name for bear, dear old Julius Otto Grimm was known and called by his friends—conducted, and fairly chuckled with joy at every beautiful phrase.

The *Triumphlied*—the difficulties of which I could appreciate, when less than four years later I had the privilege of introducing that glorious work to England at a concert I gave in the St. James's Hall for the benefit of the Victoria Hospital for Children—went splendidly. Brahms conducted, and the joy and gratification expressed in his face at the end, when

acknowledging the enthusiastic acclamations of audience, chorus, and orchestra, was evidently caused as much by the consciousness of having written a truly great work, as by its reception and appreciation; a most welcome change from the affected display of modesty or indifference often exhibited on concert platforms.

The end of that month of February found Brahms and me together in Coblentz on the Rhine, where we were the soloists at one of the regular Symphony Concerts conducted by Maszkowski, a young and enthusiastic musician, a Pole, who afterwards succeeded Bernhard Scholz as conductor of the Orchester Verein in my native Breslau. On the day before the concert there was, as usual (people seemed to have time then), the final full rehearsal—"Generalprobe"—to which in most places in Germany the public are admitted. Brahms had played Schumann's Concerto in A Minor and missed a good many notes. So in the morning of the day of the concert he went to the Concert Hall to practise. He had asked me to follow him thither a little later and to rehearse with him the songs—his, of course—he was to accompany for me in the evening. When I arrived at the hall I found him quite alone, seated at the piano and working away for all he was worth, on Beethoven's *Choral Fantasia*

and Schumann's Concerto. He was quite red in the face, and, interrupting himself for a moment on seeing me stand beside him, said with that childlike, confiding expression in his eyes: "Really, this is too bad. Those people to-night expect to hear something especially good, and here I am likely to give them a hoggish mess (*Schweinerei*). I assure you, I could play to-day, with the greatest ease, far more difficult things, with wider stretches for the fingers, my own concerto for example, but those simple diatonic runs are exasperating. I keep saying to myself: '*But, Johannes, pull yourself together,—Do play decently,*'—but no use; it's really horrid."

After our little private rehearsal of the songs, Brahms, Maszkowski, who had in the meantime joined us, and I repaired to Councillor Wegeler's, Brahms' host, in accordance with an invitation to inspect the celebrated and really wonderful wine-cellars of his firm, and to partake of a little luncheon in the sample room afterwards. Toward the end of the repast, which turned out to be a rather sumptuous affair, relished by Brahms as much as by any of us, a bottle of old Rauenthaler of the year '65 was opened, with due ceremony, by our host. It proved indeed to be a rare drop, and we all sat in almost reverential silence, bent

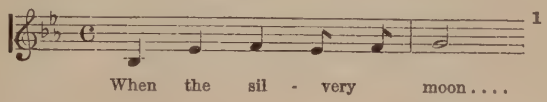
over the high, light-green goblets, which we held in close proximity to our respective noses. Wegeler at last broke the silence with the solemn words : " Yes, gentlemen, what Brahms is among the composers, this Rauenthaler is among the wines." Quick as lightning Brahms exclaimed : " *Ah, then let's have a bottle of Bach now !* "

The concert went off well, as did the supper afterwards. Brahms was in particularly high spirits. The many proofs of sincere admiration and affection he had received during his stay in Coblentz had greatly pleased and touched him, and he went so far as to make a speech—a very rare thing with him.

From Coblentz we went to Wiesbaden. We were quite alone in our compartment, and I had the happiness of finding him, in regard to his own self and his way of working, more communicative than ever before. Commencing by speaking of the events of the past days, we soon drifted into talking about art in general and music in particular.

" There is no real *creating*," he said, " without hard work. That which you would call invention, that is to say, a thought, an idea, is simply an inspiration from above, for which I am not responsible, which is no merit of mine. Yea, it is a present, a gift, which I ought even

to despise until I have made it my own by right of hard work. And there need be no hurry about that, either. It is as with the seed-corn; it germinates unconsciously and in spite of ourselves. When I, for instance, have found the first phrase of a song, say,



[1]

I might shut the book there and then, go for a walk, do some other work, and perhaps not think of it again for months. Nothing, however, is lost. If afterward I approach the subject again, it is sure to have taken shape; I can now begin really to work at it. But there are composers who sit at the piano with a poem before them, putting music to it from A to Z until it is done. They write themselves into a state of enthusiasm which makes them see something finished, something important, in every bar."

After the concert that evening we went to the house of the Princess of Hesse-Barchfeld to supper. Although Brahms, Ernst Franck, the genial composer and conductor, who had come over from Mannheim, and I were the only non-aristocratic guests present, the affair was very charming and "gemütlich." Brahms'

[1] The beginning of the beautiful song, "Die Mainacht," Op. 43.

neighbour at table was the very handsome and fascinating wife of a celebrated general, and this fact, together with the fiery Rhine wine, had a most animating effect on him. After supper the greater part of the company had a very lively game of billiards, and just before leaving, the Princess presented Brahms with a handsome box of ebony, to the lid of which a laurel wreath of silver was attached. Each leaf of the wreath had the title of one of Brahms' works engraved on it. He was delighted, though much amused, at finding on one of the leaves *Triumphlied*, that colossal Song of Triumph for double chorus and orchestra, and on the very one next to it *Wiegenlied*, the sweet little lullaby of eighteen bars.

The following morning there was a *matinée musicale* at the house of the same Princess of Hesse-Barchfeld. The Frankfort String Quartet, Hugo Heermann leading, had come over for the purpose. Brahms played with them his Quartet in C Minor, Op. 60, and then accompanied me in the longest, and to me the finest, of his romances from Tieck's beautiful *Magellone*, "Wie soll ich die Freude, die Wonne denn tragen," Op. 33, No. 6.

After the matinée Brahms took me to the Landgravine Anna of Hesse, a princess of con-

siderable musical talent, whom however, as he told me, he mostly admired for her simple and modest, yet extremely cordial and affable manners. Otherwise he did not particularly care for personal intercourse with the "highest spheres of society," as he called them.

On the Sunday before Shrove Tuesday we had intended to go to the masked ball at the Kursaal, for which we had already taken tickets. In the afternoon, however, Brahms came to my room in the hotel, and said: "I say! I have another idea; let us give the tickets to the head-waiter, and ourselves rather go to Mr. X., which will entertain us just as well."

Mr. X. was a composer of great talent and almost uncanny fertility, one of the most celebrated and popular musicians of the day; no one, I am quite sure, would be more surprised than he himself, could he—he died in 1882, leaving a record of over two hundred published compositions—revisit the scenes of his many triumphs and find himself utterly and completely forgotten.

Neither in England, where, not much longer than a quarter of a century ago, his symphonies used to attract big crowds to the Crystal Palace, nor in his native Germany, can his name now be found on concert programmes, except perhaps, on very rare occasions, as that

of the composer of a little song or violin piece. Such is fame !

" You know," Brahms said to me, " I am really fond of the man, but can't help being amused at his good-natured loquacity, which to me is as good as a play. *Do* make him speak of Wagner ; I like that especially ; and also ask him to show you one of his orchestral scores ; they are really models of what copying should be. You will see that Mr. X. is an extraordinary fellow. He is not happy unless he composes a certain number of hours every day, and with all that he copies even the parts of his symphonies himself."

Well, to Mr. X.'s house we went accordingly, finding, to our satisfaction, both him and his wife at home. Brahms seemed tired ; he spoke little, which, however, was only natural, since both Mr. X. and his wife seemed to vie with each other as to which could talk most and quickest. At last Mr. X., who constantly reminded me of Don Bartolo without the wig, was called away into the next room by his barber, who had come to shave him, and the task of entertaining us rested on Mrs. X.'s shoulders alone. " You have no idea," she said, " how hard a worker X. is (she never said ' my husband ') ; I am proud and happy to have at last prevailed upon him to go for a

walk with our daughter every day for two hours, thus keeping him at least for two hours a day from composing."

"*Ah, that's good, that's very good,*" said Brahms instantly, again looking as innocent as a new-born babe. Mr. X., upon our taking leave, offered to accompany us on a little stroll through the park, during which he told us he had received an invitation to conduct one of his symphonies at a coming musical festival in Silesia. Upon my speaking rather disparagingly of the musical achievements of the moving spirit of that festival, a member of the highest aristocracy, who had published and produced several pretentious and very inferior compositions of his own, Brahms said to me, with the pretence of a serious rebuke in his voice: "My dear Henschel, let me warn you to be more cautious when speaking of a nobleman's compositions, *for you can never know who did 'em!*"

From Wiesbaden we went to Frankfort on the Main. On arriving at the old hotel where I had been in the habit of putting up, room No. 42 was allotted to us by one of the menials. While, however, we were sitting in the taproom over a farewell bottle of Rhine wine, the head waiter, who knew us, came up to me, announcing that a far better room, No. 11, had

been placed at our disposal. After a cosy chat —in the course of which, to my great delight, Brahms had asked me if I knew of a very remote, quiet spot, untrodden by excursionists, where, during the summer vacation, we might spend a week or two together—we retired to room No. 11, and it was my instant and most ardent endeavour to go to sleep before Brahms did, as I knew from past experience that otherwise his impertinently healthy habit of snoring would mean death to any hope of sleep on my part.

My delight at seeing him take up a book and read in bed was equalled only by my horror when, after a few minutes, I saw him blow out the light of his candle. A few seconds later the room was fairly ringing with the most unearthly noises issuing from his nasal and vocal organs. What should I do? I was in despair, for I wanted sleep, and, moreover, had to leave for Berlin early next morning. A sudden inspiration made me remember room No. 42. I got up, and went downstairs to the lodge of the porter, whom, not without some difficulty, I succeeded in rousing from a sound sleep. Explaining cause and object, I made him open room No. 42 for me. After a good night's rest, I returned, early in the morning, to the room in which I had left Brahms.

He was awake and, affectionately looking at me, with the familiar little twinkle in his eye and mock seriousness in his voice, said to me, well knowing what had driven me away: "Oh, Henschel, when I awoke and found your bed empty, I said to myself, '*There! he's gone and hanged himself!*' But really, why didn't you throw a boot at me?"

The idea of my throwing a boot at Brahms!

During our hurried breakfast—Brahms, returning to Vienna, also had to take an early train—we again spoke of the coming summer, and he seemed rather attracted by the glowing description I gave him of the island of Rügen, in the Baltic Sea, which I had visited before and was very fond of, but which was quite unknown to him. So we parted with a hearty "Auf Wiedersehn," which made me very happy in anticipation.

Soon after this, in April, I had the privilege of being the guest, at the New Palace, Darmstadt, of the late and much-lamented Princess Alice of Great Britain, the consort of Prince, afterwards Grand-Duke, Louis of Hesse. The Princess was a very remarkable woman: simple and unaffected; warm-hearted, broad-minded—some Philistines in Germany grumbled at her friendship with David Strauss, the free-thinker; wonderfully versed in literature, science

and the arts; a devoted wife, and a model mother. Of her rare thoughtfulness I shall presently give an example.

On my former professional visits to Darmstadt I had been staying at the house of her secretary, Dr. Becker, and the invitation this time to the Palace came as a most gratifying surprise to me.

I had a little suite of apartments assigned to me, consisting of sitting-room, bedroom, and—in private houses then an almost unheard of luxury—my own bathroom! A valet was placed at my disposal for exclusive attendance on me, and I felt altogether very grand. I am sure I must have written some fifty letters or so during that three days' visit. The most distant members of my family, the most neglected of my friends,—I think, even, a few enemies, were suddenly and affectionately remembered by me; for the writing-paper, with the royal cipher and the heading "New Palace, Darmstadt," beautifully embossed on it, was altogether irresistible.

Every afternoon the children—sometimes they did it rather reluctantly—had to play to me on the pianoforte, and every evening after dinner—I was the only guest staying at the Palace—the Princess and I played some four-hand arrangements of classical music. On one

occasion she showed me two volumes of old English, Scottish, Irish, and Welsh melodies which perfectly fascinated me, and the Princess, seeing my enthusiasm, expressed great regret at being unable to make me a present of them, they having been given to her by her husband; "but," she said, "if ever you should go to England, I shall see that you get them." I was exceedingly grateful for what I took to be a very charming *façon de parler*, and soon forgot all about it until, a year later, a few days after my first arrival in London, I returned to my rooms one night and found a big parcel for me on the hall table, bearing on the cover the words, "By command of H.R.H. Princess Louis of Hesse," and containing the precious volumes.

. . . . . .

There were only a few more concerts during the following two months, and the long and eagerly looked for holiday with Brahms drew nearer and nearer. At last a note from him told me of his having arrived at Sassnitz, and as soon as I had packed my "seven things," as they say in Germany, and taken leave of my mother and sisters in Dresden, I started to join him.

During that unforgettable time of our daily intercourse I kept a diary, into which I made my entries every evening.

Outside of Germany and Austria, Brahms' native and adopted countries, his works are loved nowhere better nor known more widely than in England. Yea, I doubt if, as regards Brahms' place among the composers of the world, anything has been written which in soundness of judgment, discrimination, and appreciation can compare with Sir W. H. Hadow's admirable article, "Brahms and the Classical Tradition," published soon after the master's death, in the *Contemporary Review*. Yet, Brahms never having visited England, and the number of those who knew him at all intimately being very small, I venture to hope that this journal will not be unwelcome to the many who, though more or less familiar with Brahms the composer, would fain know a little more of Brahms the man.

VII

Sassnitz, on the Island of Rügen,
Saturday, July 8, 1876.

Arrived here last night. The diligence was delayed by one of the heaviest thunderstorms I can remember, and I did not pull up at the little hostelry, which also contains the post-office, until half-past eleven; but in spite of the inclemency of the weather and the late hour, Brahms was there to welcome me, and we had an hour's chat in the little coffee-room. Then he returned to his lodgings down in the village, whilst I came up here to the hotel on the Fahrnberg, where, however, to my great delight, Brahms is going to have his mid-day and evening meals regularly.

Sunday, July 9.

Early yesterday morning Brahms came up to go bathing with me. There was a fine surf on, and the temperature of the water being rather high we stayed in it for nearly half an hour, enjoying ourselves hugely. I greatly

admired Brahms' burly, well-knit, muscular body, which is only rather too much inclined to stoutness, I fear.

In the water he drew my attention to the possibility of keeping one's eyes wide open when diving. It is not only possible, he said, but also very agreeable and strengthening for the eyes. I at once followed his advice to try, succeeding immediately, and we greatly amused ourselves by throwing little copper coins into the water and diving for them.

In the evening we sat together in the Fahrnberg. I showed him the new series of Moritz Hauptmann's letters.

After we had read a few, he said: "How discreet one ought to be in writing letters. Who knows, some day they'll be printed. Now, there's hardly anything in these letters which would not read just as well if their contents were reversed. To be sure it is an agreeable gift to be able to write clever letters, but only letters of purely scientific purport are in my opinion of real value to any but those they are written to."

I drew Brahms' attention especially to one letter, written to Professor R.[1] I expressed my surprise at the lenient and amiable way in

[1] An able, but decidedly mediocre composer of good birth, who at that time occupied a rather prominent position as teacher at one of the Musical Institutions of Berlin.

which Hauptmann spoke of that gentleman's compositions.

"Well," said Brahms, "you see, R. had very aristocratic connections and Hauptmann . . . a very delicate nature."

In the course of our talk one of the greatest virtuosos of the day, a personal friend of Brahms, was mentioned. "There are people," Brahms said, "who can talk and talk about the most unlikely, impossible thing until they actually believe it themselves. It's what I would call Twaddle. For instance, the other day, after having played the last movement of my C Minor Quartet, in which a friend detected a certain resemblance to Mendelssohn's Trio in C Minor, without realizing that what, there, is theme itself, is with me simply an accompanying figure, my friend asked me,—in all seriousness, mind,—'Now, am I not right: you wanted to show what *you* could do with that theme?' How silly!"

Two stories which Brahms told me I write down as showing what a tender, sympathetic heart he has. Both stories refer to Mr. N.[1] "With us in Vienna," Brahms began, "it frequently occurs that the postmen, though officially obliged to deliver all letters at the

[1] A well-known writer and commentator on music, then living in Vienna.

doors of the respective flats to which they are addressed, leave them with the concierge of the house, who, as you know, always has his little lodgings in the souterrain. Well, Mr. N., who lived in the fourth floor, once received a letter in that way twenty-four hours later than he ought to have, if the postman had delivered it, according to his duty, at the door.

"Without warning, N. lodged an information against the offender with the general postmaster, who ordered the matter to be investigated. In the meantime a colleague of the poor postman had succeeded in persuading Mr. N.'s servant-girl to take the blame upon herself, since nothing could happen to her, whilst the postman, who was a married man with a family, would surely be dismissed. When, consequently, the post office commissioners appeared at N.'s house to ascertain the exact facts of the case, the servant-girl stepped forward, boldly declaring it was she who had omitted to deliver the letter, which had been in her pocket those twenty-four hours. And the postman was saved."

Brahms' whole face beamed with joy as he told the story, and especially the action of the brave and generous girl he could not praise highly enough.

The second story is equally pathetic.

"N. and I," said Brahms, "met at the same table in a certain coffee-house regularly on two or three evenings in the week, and it always used to embarrass me greatly when, on paying our bills, N. suspiciously scrutinized his, questioning the waiter as to this or that little item which he was not sure of having had, etc.

"One evening, when this had happened again, the waiter came close up to N., and whispered into his ear, his voice trembling with excitement and indignation: 'I *beg* of you, Mr. N., not to mistrust me; I could not live if I thought you doubted my honesty.' Then he retired. N. got up without changing a muscle in his face, and left. A little later, when I went home myself, I gave the waiter an unusually large douceur, and said, 'This . . . is . . . from the other gentleman as well.'"

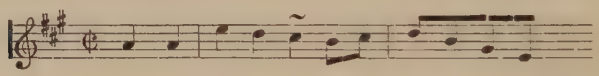
Brahms is looking splendid. His solid frame, the healthy, dark-brown colour of his face, the full hair, just a little sprinkled with grey, all make him appear the very image of strength and vigour. He walks about here just as he pleases, generally with his waistcoat unbuttoned and his hat in his hand, always with clean linen, but without collar or necktie. These he dons at *table d'hôte* only. His whole appearance vividly recalls some of the portraits

of Beethoven. His appetite is excellent. He eats with great gusto and, in the evening, regularly drinks his three glasses of beer, never omitting, however, to finish off with his beloved "Kaffee."

July 10.

Yesterday afternoon I spent nearly three hours in Brahms' rooms. He showed me new songs of his, asking me if I could suggest a short way of indicating that a certain phrase in one of them was not his own.

"I have," he said, "taken a charming motive of Scarlatti's



as the theme of a song I composed to one of Goethe's poems, and should like to acknowledge my indebtedness." I proposed, as the best and simplest way, that he should merely place Scarlatti's name at the end of the phrase in question.[1]

He also showed me the manuscript of an unpublished song and the first movement of a Requiem Mass, both by Schubert, enthusiastically commenting on their beauty. The first two issues of the Bach Society's publication of

[1] This was done, and the spirited, humorous song afterwards published as No. 5 of Op. 72 (Simrock).

cantatas were lying on his table, and he pointed out to me how badly the accompaniments were often arranged for the piano; how, in fact, the endeavour to bring out as nearly as possible every individual part of the orchestra had rendered the arrangement well-nigh unplayable for any but a virtuoso.

"The chief aim," he said, "of a pianoforte arrangement of orchestral accompaniments must always be to be easily playable. Whether the different parts move correctly, *i.e.* in strict accordance with the rules of counterpoint, does not matter in the least."

Then we went together through the full score of Mozart's *Requiem*, which he had undertaken to prepare for a new edition of that master's works. I admired the great trouble he had taken in the revision of the score. Every note of Süssmayer's was most carefully distinguished from Mozart's own.

It was a wonderful experience to have this man's company quite to myself for so long a time. During all these days Brahms has never spoken of anything which does not really interest him, never said anything superfluous or commonplace, except at the *table d'hôte*, where he purposely talks of hackneyed things, such as the weather, food, the temperature of the water, excursions, etc., etc.

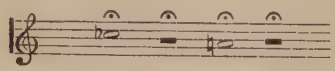
July 11.

I bought a strong hammock yesterday, and Brahms and I went into the lovely beech-wood and hung it up between two trees, on a spot from which through the foliage we could see the sea far below us. We both managed to climb into it simultaneously, an amusing, though by no means easy task to accomplish. After having comfortably established ourselves in it, we enjoyed a very cosy, agreeable hour or two of *dolce far niente*. Brahms was in an angelic mood, and went from one charming, interesting story to another, in which the gentler sex played a not unimportant part.

In the afternoon we resolved to go on an expedition to find *his* bullfrog pond, of which he had spoken to me for some days. His sense of locality not being very great, we walked on and on across long stretches of waste moorland. Often we heard the weird call of bullfrogs in the distance, but he would say: "No, that's not *my* pond yet," and on we walked. At last we found it, a tiny little pool in the midst of a wide plain grown with heather. We had not met a human being the whole way, and this solitary spot seemed out of the world altogether.

"Can you imagine," Brahms began, "anything more sad and melancholy than this music, the undefinable sounds of which for ever and

ever move within the pitiable compass of a diminished third ?



" Here we can realise how fairy tales of enchanted princes and princesses have originated. . . . Listen ! There he is again, the poor King's son with his yearning, mournful C flat ! " [1]

We stretched ourselves out in the low grass,—it was a very warm evening,—lighted cigarettes and lay listening in deepest silence, not a breath of wind stirring, for fully half an hour. Then we leaned over the pond, caught tiny little baby frogs and let them jump into the water again from a stone, which greatly amused Brahms, especially when the sweet little creatures, happy to be in their element once more, hurriedly swam away, using their nimble little legs most gracefully and according to all the rules of the natatory art. When they thought themselves quite safe, Brahms would tenderly catch one up again in his hand, and heartily laugh with pleasure on giving it back its freedom. . . .

During our walk homeward, we spoke almost exclusively of musical matters, and he said :

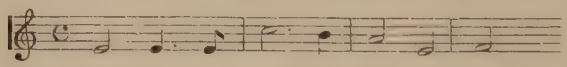
[1] It is interesting to note that in Brahms' songs dating from this period this interval frequently occurs.

" You must practise more gymnastics, my dear, four-part songs, variations, string quartets, etc. ; that will be beneficial to your opera, too." [1]

As we parted for the night, he called after me : " Come for me to-morrow morning, to go bathing ; and bring new songs, *Gerda* score, or other beautiful things." (How he *does* like to tease !) So this morning I brought him three new songs of mine.

The afternoon was again spent in the hammock, and on the way home we came to talk of Wagner's trilogy, *The Ring of the Nibelungs*. I had just spoken of some, to me, especially beautiful places in the first act of *The Valkyrie*, and of the fresh and breezy song of Siegfried in *Siegfried* " From the wood forth into the world fare."

" Certainly," he said, " these are fine things, but I can't help it, somehow or other, they do not interest me. What you just hummed



is no doubt beautiful ; and when Siegmund in the *Valkyrie* pulls the sword out of the tree, that's fine, too ; but it would, in my opinion, be *really* powerful and carry one away, if it all concerned—let us say, young Buonaparte, or

[1] I was engaged at that time in writing a very tragic opera *Gerda* !

some other hero who stands nearer to our sensibilities, has a closer claim to our affection. And then that stilted, bombastic language." He took a copy of the text-book. "Listen":

An Brünnhild's Felsen
Fahret vorbei:
Der dort noch lodert,
Weiset Loge nach Walhall!
Denn der Götter Ende
Dämmert nun auf;
So—werf' ich den Brand
In Walhall's prangende Burg.

(By Brynhild's rock then
Take ye the road.
Who still there flameth,
Loge, show him to Walhall.
For the end of the Gods
Is dawning at last;
Thus—throw I the torch
Into Walhall's glittering walls.)

He recited the words with greatly exaggerated pathos. "If I read this to a counting-house clerk, I am sure it would make a tremendous impression: 'So—werf'—ich den Brand—' . . . *I* do not understand this kind of thing. What really does happen with the ring? Do *you* know? And those endless and tedious duets! Look at even Goethe's *Tasso*, a masterpiece of the first rank. Every word there is pure gold; yet the long duets in it, though fine reading, prevent the play from being interesting as a drama."

July 12.

I went to Brahms' rooms last night. He had been reading, but, putting away his book, gave me a cordial welcome and began looking through my new manuscript songs. He took up the one in E flat "Where Angels linger," [1] and said, "Now there is a charming song. In some of the others you seem to me too easily satisfied. One ought never to forget that by actually perfecting *one* piece one gains and learns more than by commencing or half-finishing a dozen. Let it rest, let it rest, and keep going back to it and working at it over and over again, until it is completed as a finished work of art, until there is not a note too much or too little, not a bar you could improve upon. Whether it is *beautiful* also, is an entirely different matter, but perfect it *must* be. You see, I am rather lazy, but I never cool down over a work, once begun, until it is perfected, unassailable."

Thus he continued speaking, drawing, in the most amiable way, my attention to this little defect, that little blemish, so that I sat happy and silent, careful not to interrupt this, to me, so precious lesson.

July 13.

I asked him yesterday if he had thought of going to the inauguration performances of

[1] Afterwards published in Op. 34 (Bote & Bock).

The Nibelungs' Ring at Bayreuth in August. "I am afraid," he said, "it's too expensive. I have repeatedly heard *Rheingold* and *Walküre* at Münich, and confess it would greatly interest me, but—well, we'll think of it."

Then, taking up the volume of Hauptmann's letters I had lent him, and pointing to one of them, he said: "Just look; do you see these asterisks instead of a name?" I did, and read the whole sentence, which described a certain composer, indicated by the asterisks, as a rather haughty young man. "*That's me*," said Brahms amusedly. "When I was a very young man I remember playing, at Göttingen, my Sonata in C to Hauptmann. He was not very complimentary about it, in fact, had much fault to find with it, which I, a very modest youth at that time, accepted in perfect silence. I afterwards heard that this silence had been interpreted and complained of as haughtiness. I confess, the more I read of these letters the clearer it becomes to me that they are written with a certain consciousness of importance. Beethoven would have laughed if any one, seeing in one of his letters a remark on any subject whatever, had taken this as proving the justice of such remark. But there are people—take, for instance, Varnhagen—who, never having accomplished anything really

great themselves, sit down at their writing-desks in a peevish, sulky temper, pulling to pieces—even when praising—everything they can lay hold of. To twaddle about Bach or Beethoven, as is done in the letters to Hauser, in a chattering, feuilletonistic way, is wholly unnecessary: they are too great for that kind of thing."

July 14.

Last evening we were sitting downstairs in the coffee-room, having supper, when suddenly some one in the adjoining dining-hall began to play Chopin's Study in A flat on the piano. I sprang up, intending to put a stop to it, and exclaiming, "*Oh, these women!*" when Brahms said, "No, my dear, this is no woman." I went into the hall to look, and found he was right. "Yes," he said, "in this respect I am hardly ever mistaken; and it is by no means an easy thing to distinguish, by the sense of hearing alone, a feminine man from a masculine woman!"

July 15.

Yesterday morning I took to Brahms the orchestral score of Wagner's *Götterdämmerung*. In the afternoon he said to me, "*Why* did you bring it to me?" (He had particularly asked

me for it!) "The thing interests, and fascinates one, and yet, properly speaking, is not always pleasant. With the *Tristan* score it is different. If I look at that in the morning, I am cross for the rest of the day." [1]

. . . To-day I read out, from a Berlin paper, the news of the death, at Bayreuth, of a member of the Wagner orchestra. "*The first corpse*," said Brahms, dryly.

July 17.

Yesterday I was with Brahms from noon until eleven at night without interruption. He was in excellent spirits. We had our swim in the sea together, and again found much amusement in diving for little red pebbles. After

[1] I well remember my wondering at the time just what meaning Brahms intended to convey by these words. My old friend, Max Kalbeck, editor of the *Neues Tagblatt* in Vienna, who published excerpts from my diary in his paper, made the following comment on them:

"This sentence needs an explanation, since it could easily be interpreted as meaning that *Tristan*, in contrast to the 'not always pleasant' *Ring of the Nibelungs*, had pleased Brahms very much, so much, indeed, that it made him cross out of envy. We know from personal experience that Brahms, though warmly acknowledging the many musical beauties of the work, had a particular dislike for *Tristan*, and as to envy, he never in his life envied any one. In Wagner he admired, above all, the magnitude of his intentions and the energy in carrying them out. The Bayreuth Festival Theatre he hailed as a national affair. We believe the chief reason why Brahms never went to Bayreuth is to be found in the circumstance that the performances always happened at a season when he, after long and arduous creative work, was wont to give himself up entirely to the recreation of an out-of-door life in the country."

the mid-day dinner Brahms was lying in my room, in the hammock which I had secured between window and door, while I read to him Meilhac's amusing comedy, *L'Attaché*. After the usual coffee at a coffee-house on the beach, we went for a long stroll in the Hansemann Park, near Crampas, the nearest village. We spoke, among other things, of Carl Loewe. Brahms thinks highly of his ballads and Serbian songs. "However, with us in Vienna," he said, "Loewe is, to my regret, much overrated. One places him, in his songs, side by side with, in his ballads, above, Schubert, and overlooks the fact that what with the one is genius, with the other is merely talented craft. . . .

"In writing songs," he cautioned me, "you must endeavour to invent, simultaneously with the melody, a healthy, powerful bass. You stick too much to the middle parts. In that song in E flat, for instance"—he again referred to "Where Angels linger"—"you have hit upon a very charming middle part, and the melody, too, is very lovely, but that isn't all, is it? And then, my dear friend, let me counsel you: no heavy dissonances on the unaccentuated parts of the bar, please! That is weak. I am very fond of dissonances, you'll agree, but on the heavy, accentuated parts of the bar, and then let them be resolved easily and gently."

Speaking of Schubert's setting of Goethe's songs, he said, "Schubert's '*Suleika*' songs are to me the only instances where the power and beauty of Goethe's words have been enhanced by the music. All other of Goethe's poems seem to me so perfect in themselves that no music can improve them."

Passing from music to literature, he remarked: "Paul Heyse used to be one of the most charming men imaginable. He was beautiful and exceptionally amiable, and I hardly know of any one who, suddenly entering a room, would illuminate it, so to speak, by his personality in the way Heyse did.

"Bodenstedt is greatly overrated. His poetry is my special aversion. Geibel, on the other hand, seems to me not appreciated enough."

. . . . . .

Perhaps I may be allowed here to interrupt the diary for a moment, and to draw the reader's attention to the discretion and judiciousness with which Brahms selected the words for his songs.

If we look at the texts to his vocal music, of which there exists a vast mass, we shall find that the sources—individual or national—from which he drew his inspiration, have in themselves been, to a greater or lesser degree,

inspired. All his songs, duets, quartets, etc., are set to beautiful, significant, worthy poems.

If one of the chief aims of art be to elevate, *i.e.* to raise mankind for the time being above the commonplace routine of life, above paltry everyday thoughts and cares, in short, from things earthy to things celestial, surely such an aim should be discernible even in the smallest form of the expression of art.

Just as the beauties of nature, testifying to the incomprehensible greatness of the divine power, reveal themselves as convincingly in a little primrose as in the huge trees of the Yosemite Valley, in the sweet prattling of a little brooklet as in the roaring thunder of Niagara, in the lovely undulations of the Scottish hills as in the awe-inspiring heights of the Himalayas, so beauty of soul, honesty of purpose, purity of mind, can shine as brightly in the shortest song as in the longest symphony.

No true artist then in the realm of music will debase his muse by wedding it to sentimental trash as far removed from poetry as a mole-hill from Mount Parnassus, though it often be a difficult task, especially for young people, to distinguish sentimentality from sentiment.

The former may be described as superficial, aimless pity; affected, unreal, unwholesome emotion. Sentiment, on the other hand, is true

emotion; it is the feeling that grows naturally out of the sympathetic contemplation of a thing; and the sentiment it is, not the thing, which we ought to look for, in the first place, even in a little song, as a fit object for poetic and musical expression.

A true artist's spirit will not allow itself to be moved by versifications of penny-a-line newspaper reports, such as the capsizing of a little pleasure-boat with two hapless lovers in it, or the death by starvation of a poor old seamstress ready to meet her lover in heaven, or effusions of a similar kind, generally ending in pseudo-religious inferences and exhortations little short of blasphemy.

The standing of the pale, hungry little boy outside the window of a confectioner's shop and observing inside the shop the rich, ruddy little fellow eating his fill, that is not poetry, even if put into faultless verse and rhyme, but simply a fact, and a sad one, too, the contemplation of which might, in a fine poetic mind, produce the most beautiful sentiments of compassion with the sufferings of our fellow-creatures, of tenderness, of love; but to let the poor little chap march straightway to heaven, to the fortissimo accompaniment of triplets on the last page of an up-to-date ballad, that is sentimentality, and cruel mockery into the bargain.

I well remember what fun Brahms and I had in later years when I showed him some specimens of the typical popular English ballad, now fortunately almost an extinct species, and how we laughed—especially over the sad ones! But to return to the rest of the journal.

. . . . . .

After supper we sat, quite alone in the dark on the terrace of the Fahrnberg. Soon our conversation took a more serious turn. He spoke of friendship and of men, and how, properly speaking, he believed very little in either.

"How few true men there are in the world!" he exclaimed. "The two Schumanns, Robert and Clara, there you have two true, beautiful 'Menschenbilder' (images of man). Knowledge, achievement, power, position—nothing can outweigh this: to be a beautiful 'Menschenbild.' Do you know Allgeyer in Munich?[1] There you have one, too." And then he began to talk with touching warmth of the time when, in Allgeyer's house at Karlsruhe, he wrote his "Mainacht" and the D Minor movement of his Requiem. . . . "I sometimes regret," he

[1] An engraver and photographer with a great love for music; the intimate friend of the painter Anselm Feuerbach, and one of a small circle of musicians, painters, and poets then living in Munich, and comprising, among others, Hermann Levi, Franz Lenbach, Paul Heyse, and Wilhelm Busch.

said to me after some moments of silence, " that I did not marry. I ought to have a boy of ten now; that *would* be nice. But when I was of the right age for marrying I lacked the position to do so, and now it is too late."

Speaking of this had probably revived in him reminiscences of his own boyhood, for he continued: " Only once in my life have I played truant and shirked school, and that was the vilest day of my life. When I came home my father had already been informed of it, and I got a solid hiding."

" But still," he said, " my father was a dear old man, very simple-minded and most unsophisticated, of which qualities I must give you an amusing illustration:

" You know he was a double-bass player in the Municipal Orchestra of Hamburg, and in his leisure hours tried to increase his scanty little income by copying music.

" He was sitting in his room at the top of the house one fine day, with the door wide open, absorbed in writing out the parts from an orchestral score, when in walked a tramp, begging. My father looked up at him quickly, without interrupting his work, and, in his very pronounced Hamburg dialect, said:

" ' I cannot give you anything, my dear man. Besides, don't you know it's very wrong of

you to come into a room in this way? How easily might you not have taken my overcoat that's hanging in the hall! Get out, and don't you do it again!'

"The tramp humbly apologized and withdrew.

"When, a few hours later, my father wanted to go out for a walk, the overcoat had of course disappeared."

Brahms then touched upon his relations with the members of his family, and told me he still supported his old stepmother. With his sister he had little in common; their interests had always been too far apart. Between his brother, whom he had likewise supported, and himself, there existed no intercourse whatever. . . .

The other day I happened to hum the theme of the Andante from his Quartet in C Minor. He seemed rather to like my doing so, for when it came to the place

he accompanied my humming with gentle movements of his hand, as if beating time to it. At last he smilingly said: "I am not at all ashamed to own that it gives me the keenest pleasure if a song, an adagio, or anything of

mine, has turned out particularly good. How must those gods: Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, have felt, whose daily bread it was to write things like the *St. Matthew Passion*, *Don Giovanni*, *Fidelio*, *Ninth Symphony*! What I cannot understand is how people like myself can be vain. As much as we men, who walk upright, are above the creeping things of the earth, so these gods are above us. If it were not so ludicrous it would be loathsome to me to hear colleagues of mine praise me to my face in such an exaggerated manner."

Thus he went on; it was no longer modesty, it was humility, and I took good care not to disturb his mood by a single word.

Soon, however, he smiled again, and remarked, among other things, that he considered the Agitato from his still unpublished Quartet in B flat the most amorous, affectionate thing he had written.

When we parted that night, he said: "You *will* write me from Bayreuth, won't you? I know you will rave about it, and I don't blame you. I myself must confess *Walküre* and *Götterdämmerung* have a great hold on me. For *Rheingold* and *Siegfried* I do not particularly care. If I only knew what becomes of the Ring and what Wagner means by it! Perhaps the Cross? Hebbel, in his *Nibelunge*, has dared it,

and perhaps it was Wagner's meaning too. I am by no means a fanatic as to my devotion to the cross, but that, at least, would be an idea —thus to indicate the termination of the reign of the gods."

July 18.

Yesterday, when, after our usual swim, we leisurely strolled to the Fahrnberg for dinner, a button on Brahms' shirt suddenly came off. As it was the one which served to hold the collar in its place, Brahms was greatly embarrassed. I proposed to help him out, and we went to my room, where I took out of my valise a little box containing sewing materials which my mother had given me to carry with me when travelling. The amusing situation of my sewing the button on to Brahms' shirt while he had it on, again recalled memories of his youth. "When *I* went on my first journey," he said, laughingly, "my mother also put such a little box into my bag, and showed me how to use its contents. But I remember quite well, when I tore a hole in my trousers, I repaired it with sealing wax! It didn't last long, though."

At luncheon, as it was my last day, we had a bottle of champagne between us. In the afternoon, the other guests having partly retired to their rooms, partly gone on excur-

sions, Brahms played the accompaniments to some songs for me. Since our arrival this was the first time that he had touched the keyboard and that I had sung. I began with Brahms' "Mainacht," then came a Schubert song, and then Beethoven's cyclus "To the Absent Beloved." When we had ended we were surprised to find that all the adjoining rooms had filled with listeners. Mine host of the Fahrnberg was greatly touched, and thanked Brahms for the honour he had done to his house.

In the train to Berlin, *July* 19.

This morning, at five o'clock, I left Sassnitz. Strangely enough, it again poured in torrents, as on the night of my arrival. A horrid, chilly morning. Brahms was up at the Fahrnberg a little before five, and, to my delight, accompanied me in the diligence as far as Lancken, some three miles from Sassnitz. There he got out, we shook hands, and parted. For a long time I looked after him out of the carriage window in spite of the wind and the still pouring rain. It was a picture never to be forgotten. As far as the eye could reach, nothing but moor, and clouds, and—Brahms.

. . . . . .

Here closes the journal. As, during the

twenty-one years of undisturbed friendship that followed our intercourse had to be mostly by letter, and our meetings fewer and further between, the Channel and, later on, the Atlantic separating us bodily, I shall complete now what further recollections of the great composer I have preserved.

VIII

In 1878 Brahms had considerably changed his outward appearance by the growth of the long and flowing beard in the frame of which his face has become familiar to the last and present generations. Our first meeting was marked by an amusing little incident, illustrative of his ever-abiding love of fun.

At the end of that year I was engaged upon an extended recital tour through Austria and Hungary, together with my friend Ignaz Brüll, the composer and pianist. We commenced in Vienna. Having arrived only a day or two previous to the first recital I had not seen Brahms as yet. At the end of the concert Brüll and I were receiving, in the artists' room, the congratulations of friends, when suddenly I saw a man unknown to me, rather stout, of middle height, with long hair and full beard, coming up toward me. In a very deep and hoarse voice he introduced himself "Musik-director Müller," making a very stiff and formal bow, which I was on the point of returning with

equal gravity, when, an instant later, we all found ourselves heartily laughing at the perfect success of Brahms' disguise, for, of course, he it was. . . .

Of subsequent reunions, two have been especially vividly impressed on my mind. In order that my wife, who hitherto had only occasionally met this great and admired friend, should have an opportunity of knowing him more familiarly, she and I travelled to Vienna, in 1894, for the sole purpose of spending a few days in Brahms' company.

"For once, dear friend," he had written to me on my announcing our visit, "Simrock is right.[1] I am not the last, nor by any means the only one rejoiced at the prospect of your coming. Heartily welcome then, and may it be a cheerful meeting!"

On our arrival in Vienna, rather late in the evening of April 23, we found a note from Brahms awaiting us at our hotel: "If not too tired after your journey, do come to us, quite close by, at the restaurant of the 'Musik-Verein'; just as you are, informally, in your travelling clothes." Who could resist the temptation? Arrived at the indicated place, we found a little party of men and women,

[1] This was meant facetiously. Fritz Simrock, Brahms' publisher, was, and remained to the end, one of the most trusted and highly valued of his friends.

mostly members of the "Tonkünstler-Verein" (Tone-Artists' Union), gathered together in a social way, as usual, after one of their weekly concerts. Brahms, surrounded, as always on such occasions, by a host of admiring ladies, young and elderly, in regard to whose charms and homage his susceptibilities had not by any means lessened with the advancing years, was in excellent spirits and gave us a most cordial welcome.

Early the following morning we went to his rooms. He received us, as was his wont with friends, irrespective of sex, attired in a short jacket of which the lowest button only was put to its proper use; without waistcoat or shirt collar, and in slippers. The coffee-machine—he always made his own coffee in the morning—was still standing on the table; the air of the large, yet cosy room was filled with the delicious fragrance peculiar to Viennese coffee; the sun shone brightly through the large windows and the whole atmosphere was one of quiet, inward happiness, contentment, and ease.

Soon our host commenced to ransack drawers, cupboards, shelves for things he thought might interest and entertain us, when suddenly, with that dear, familiar twinkle in his eyes and a long-drawn "A-a-ah!" he

motioned us to settle down quickly to a treat which apparently he had in store for us. Then, smilingly and with mock ceremony, he opened a large portfolio and showed and read to us, with great gusto, the famous letters of Richard Wagner to the milliner. He had bought the collection recently and seemed very proud of the precious possession, chuckling with amusement as he went from one amazing letter to another.

After a few days of charming intercourse with him and our mutual friends Ignaz Brüll, Max Kalbeck, Carl Goldmark, and Johann Strauss, the famous composer of the "Blue Danube" valse, which Brahms often protested he would have given much to have written himself, we left Vienna; and only once more was I privileged to see the great man in the flesh.

That was in January 1896, when Brahms, Edvard Grieg, Arthur Nikisch, and myself spent a delightful evening together at one of the favourite restaurants of Leipsic.

Brahms, rather stouter, it seemed to me, than I had ever seen him before, was in the merriest of moods and did ample justice to the excellent beer of Munich brew, of which he consumed an astounding quantity before we parted, long after midnight.

Nothing seemed to indicate the approach of the mortal disease which was to take hold of him so soon afterwards, and little did Nikisch and I dream that night that our next meeting would be among the mourners at Brahms' funeral.

It was in the evening of April 3, 1897, that I arrived in Vienna, too late to see the dear friend alive. He had breathed his last that morning.

I hurried to the death-chamber, which had been transferred into a *chapelle ardente.* The arrangements usual in Catholic countries: a plentiful display of silver crosses on draperies of black velvet, huge brass candelabra on which tall wax candles were burning, presented a strange contrast to the simplicity of the life and habits of the master (who had been a Protestant), and it was only the beautiful flowers which Love and Admiration had piled up in great and fragrant masses on the floor beneath the canopy until they reached high above the coffin, almost completely hiding it from sight, that somewhat reconciled one to the inappropriateness of the official decoration of the room.

The Tuesday following, April 6, was the day of the funeral. As if Nature had wished to present an image of the character of the master's

music, combining, as it does, the gentle with the severe, cold winds of winter alternated with balmy breezes of spring.

From early morning on, friends and deputations, carrying wreaths and flowers and palm-branches, followed each other in constant succession up the three familiar flights of stairs to the master's apartments, and the place before the house of mourning in the Karlsgasse began to fill with people ready to join in the procession. By noon nearly the whole of the street, and the open space in front of the adjoining Karlskirche, were one mass of humanity. All musical Vienna seemed assembled, and the extraordinarily large number of eminent men and women who had come from far and near to pay their last tribute of Love and Devotion to what had been mortal of Johannes Brahms must have conveyed some idea of his greatness and popularity, even to those who hitherto had perhaps not quite realized either.

One could not help being reminded of the historical answer the old peasant woman gave to the stranger who had happened to arrive in Vienna on the day of Beethoven's funeral: "Whose funeral is this?" the wondering stranger had asked. "Why, don't you know?" was the reply, "They are a-buryin' the *General of the Musicians!*"

At last the coffin with its precious load appeared in the doorway. Every head uncovered. Amid reverential and most impressive silence it was lifted on to the open funeral car. To its lid were fastened two wreaths of gigantic proportions, sent, the one by the composer's native city, the free town of Hamburg, the other by the corporation of Vienna, the home of his adoption; and the procession, headed by a standard-bearer in old Spanish costume, riding on a black horse, started on its melancholy journey.

The rather lugubrious impression created by the six riders in similar attire, who, also mounted on coal-black horses and carrying lighted tapers on long poles, followed the standard-bearer, was relieved by a wonderful sight: a succession of six high, open funeral cars, each freighted to the very top with an abundance of beautiful fresh flowers, laurels, palms; their many-coloured ribbons floating down to the ground. The sun, which had come out gloriously by that time, shone, as it were, on a gigantic moving garden; a spectacle as lovely as it was solemn. Before the building of the "Society of the Friends of Music," the procession halted. The doors and pillars were draped in black cloth. On either side of the portal, from metal bowls, resting on the top

of high candelabra and filled with ignited spirit of wine, blue flames were flickering with a subdued, mystical light. From underneath a canopy the "Sing-Verein," which so often had sung under the inspiring direction of the master, now sang his own beautiful part-song, "Farewell" (Op. 93 A, No. 4).

As the lovely strains rang out into the vernal air, there could be heard from the neighbouring trees the merry twittering of birds whose song seemed to have been kindled by the unwonted occurrence no less than by the approach of spring. At last, after a short choral service in the old church in the Dorotheër Gasse, the cemetery was reached. Another touching farewell, another song—and the mortal remains of Johannes Brahms were lowered into their last resting-place, close to those of Beethoven and Schubert.

. . . . . .

I have forgotten the name of the preacher who delivered the funeral oration in the church, but the echo of his eloquent words is still ringing in my ears.

There have at all times lived great artists who have been small men. In Brahms both the man and the artist aspired to high and lofty ideals. It never was his aim or ambition to gain for himself, through cheap and dazzling

play with tones or "catching" tunes, the quickly withering crowns of popular favour.

Though undisguisedly delighted when finding himself appreciated and acclaimed, he coveted neither fame nor applause. He was of a very simple, kind, childlike disposition. He loved children, and to make them happy was to himself a source of pure happiness.

He loved the poor, to whom his heart went out in sympathy and pity. He hated show of charity. But where he could comfort in silence those who suffered in silence, those who struggled against undeserved misfortune, the sick and the helpless, there the man, so modest, sparing, and unpretentious in his own wants, became a benefactor, ready for sacrifice. No better summing up of Brahms' character and personality has been written than that contained in the words of his and my old friend, Franz Wüllner: "He has left us a precious inheritance, the noble example of a rare truthfulness and simplicity in art and life; of a relentless severity toward himself, of a hatred of self-conceit and pretence; of a high-minded, inflexible, unwavering, artistic conviction. To him may be truly applied Goethe's fine words in his Epilogue to Schiller's *Lay of the Bell*:

> With mighty steps his soul advanced
> Toward the ever True—Good—Beautiful."

IX

The time immediately following those unforgettable days with Brahms on the island of Rügen in 1876 was spent in the Thuringian Woods, where, at the summer home of a dear friend, I prepared myself for the great musical event of the time, the first performance, at Bayreuth, in August of that year, of Wagner's trilogy, *The Ring of the Nibelungs*, by studying the scores of that stupendous work and trying to get over the feeling of disappointment at finding the passionate, noble Wotan of the *Walküre*, whom I loved, to have turned, as the Wanderer in *Siegfried*, with those endless arguments with Erda, into something of a bore — a feeling which, if truth must be told, neither the Bayreuth nor any subsequent performances have been able to modify.

To try to express in words the awe and wonder, the frantic enthusiasm, with which the great trilogy was received at that memorable occasion in Bayreuth would be as useless as to attempt to depict the scenes in the streets of

that quaint, quiet little Bavarian town a few days previous to the first performance. They were thronged with people of all nationalities, who could be seen taking off their hats, as to a king, to Richard Wagner as now and then he was driving to the station in an open landau, attired in evening-dress and white necktie, though it be broad daylight, to receive a reigning German prince who arrived to hear his work—the work of the revolutionary on whose proscribed head, in 1848, a price had been put! Truly a wonderful illustration of the all-conquering power of genius.

The mornings of the days of the performances and the whole day of rest between *Walküre* and *Siegfried* were generally devoted to excursions into the charming and picturesque surroundings of Bayreuth, and everywhere the restaurants were crowded with visitors and the merry folk of musicians, members of the orchestra and singers, from the prima donnas and "Heldentenors" downward, to such an extent that people of the most proper description and of both sexes could be seen sitting on empty beer-barrels on the side walks, and offering—the keepers of hotels and lodging-houses evidently not being prepared nor having provided for so large a concourse of people—as much as three or four shillings for

a glass of Munich beer and a pair of Vienna sausages. The feeling of all these people that they had come not merely to listen to, or to take part in, a new work, but to be fellow-actors in a great historical event, to assist at the inauguration of a new era in music, appeared to have created a spirit of camaraderie which made itself felt wherever you went and gradually grew into a sort of contagious intoxication. Introduction did not seem to be needed for the opening of a conversation between strangers. Ladies were addressed with "*Freisliche Frau*," pretty waitresses became "*Niedliche Nicker*," every aged cab-horse was "*Grane mein Ross*," and the air was fairly ringing with "*Wallala weiala weias*" and "*Hoyotohos*."

Many a jolly outing I had during the week in the company of my dear friend, the genial Hofkapellmeister Hermann Levi, a charming, amiable man, full of wit and humour. He had with him a younger brother, who, some years before, had embraced Christianity and taken the name of Lindeck, whilst Levi had clung to the faith of his fathers—his own had been a Rabbi in Karlsruhe—and to his Jewish name. During one of these excursions a young lady of our party, a little indiscreetly perhaps, had asked him how it was that he, Hermann Levi, had a brother by the name of Lindeck.

"Well, you see," said Levi, "my name was originally Lindeck too, but I changed it to Levi."

The moment, however, you entered the theatre, you seemed transformed. Frivolity was left outside. Quietly the people took their seats, and what little there had been of subdued talking was hushed into a solemn silence just before the commencement of the music.

From act to act, from performance to performance, the excitement of the vast audience grew. In *Rheingold* the wonderful impersonation of Loge by Vogl; in the *Walküre* that incomparable trio of artists: Albert Niemann as Siegmund, Betz as Wotan, Amalie Friedrich Materna as Brünnhilde; in *Siegfried* the manly, youthful figure of Unger, the masterly study of the cunning Mime, by Schlosser; in the *Götterdämmerung* the noble personality of Gura as Gunther, to mention a few only—who that was present at this feast could ever forget it?

To me the culminating point of the whole was the Death of Siegfried. Alone from the point of scenic beauty I have never seen anything to compare with it. As the body of Siegfried was placed on the shield and slowly carried shoulder-high along the hilly, wooded banks of the Rhine to the passionate strains of that stupendous Funeral March, the moon

breaking through the clouds just at the appearance of the beautiful Love-motif, the impression was simply overwhelming. Wagner's conception of the music drama as a perfect blending of the three arts, poetry, music, and painting, here seemed to have had its consummate realisation. After the last note of the great trilogy had died away and the seemingly minute-long, awed silence of the deeply moved audience given place to an outburst of frantic enthusiasm, amid which Wagner was called again and again, until he delivered himself of that historical speech containing the famous and at the time much-discussed phrase, "Now it rests with you whether or no we shall have a German Art," I had to walk around the theatre in the dark for a while, quite by myself, before I felt like returning to reality and realism by joining my friends at supper.

The end of the year found me again in Petrograd, where, among other concerts, I had to take part in the performance of Rubinstein's *Paradise Lost*. To see Rubinstein conduct one of his works was to see him at his best, not as a musician, but as a man and friend; that is to say, not because he was a particularly good conductor, but because he was happiest when finding himself acclaimed as a composer. Needless to say, his continuous

triumphs as a pianoforte virtuoso could not help being a source of keenest satisfaction to him, but it was the unfading laurels of a composer his heart and soul longed for, and toward the end of his life it had become an actual grief to him that his larger works, the oratorios and operas, had not been received with the favour he had hoped for—not even achieved the momentary success in which the sanguine artistic nature is often inclined to hail the dawn of ultimate popularity. I like to remember Rubinstein as he was that night in Petrograd, smiling and proud and happy as the vast audience attentively followed the performance of his work and, at the end, shouted and waved their approval. I sang the part of Lucifer, which suited me well. Indeed in later years I seemed to have acquired quite a reputation for impersonating that fallen angel in some form or other. The Mephisto in Berlioz's *Faust* came next; then the Lucifer in Sullivan's *Golden Legend*; then Boito's *Mefistofele*; then the Satan in Stanford's *Eden*; and only two years ago my old friend, Sir Alexander Mackenzie, wrote to me: "I am at work on a sacred piece . . . all I may say is that 'Satan' (always a popular gentleman) is in it, and I only wish you would add this one to the several Lucifers it has been your lot to perform."

The Petrograd season of that year was rendered particularly brilliant by the appearance at the Imperial Opera of the incomparable Adelina Patti. I heard her as Rosina in the *Barber of Seville*, a part in which I think no other singer has quite approached her yet. Not only was her singing absolutely perfect, but she also acted bewitchingly. When some years later, at a State Concert at Buckingham Palace, I had the great pleasure of singing with her, her voice seemed to have lost nothing of its rare beauty and charm, her vocal art to be still as perfect as human achievement can ever hope to be; and when, later still, her annual concert at the Royal Albert Hall formed for many years a regular feature of each succeeding season, it was in no spirit of raillery, but with a sincere sense of admiration for her wonderful capacity to remain young that I wrote on a picture post-card representing the Royal Albert Hall—

> Look at this building tall and weighty:
> Here Patti 'll sing when she is eighty.

This was one of a dozen or so post-cards of London, the pictures of which I supplemented by a doggerel and sent to the daughter of a Dutch friend shortly before that young lady's first visit to London, with the sights of which

I wanted her to become familiar. I remember only one other of those cards, with a picture of the Mansion House, under which I had written :

> Here, even in the darkest night,
> You'll always find an Israelight.

But I am anticipating. I have not arrived in England yet, so will hurry back to Russia, thereby completing the record of the year which preceded that important event in my life ; a year, moreover, which was made memorable by an experience which I am sure has fallen to the lot of but few people : owing to the difference of twelve days between the Russian calendar and that of the rest of Europe I was cheated out of both Christmas and New Year.

My last engagement in Petrograd happened to be three days before Christmas, and when, having left Russia the morning following, I arrived in Germany, the New Year was over ! Query : Did I lose or gain these twelve days ?

. . . . . .

In the autumn of 1876 I had received a letter from Mr. Arthur Chappell, the director of the Monday and Saturday Popular Concerts in London, famous as the Monday and Saturday "Pops," inviting me, at the instance of my old friend, Mrs. Moscheles, to sing at two of

these concerts after the New Year. I joyfully accepted, and now the time had come for that momentous journey. I made my preparations for a stay of a few weeks, little dreaming that England, almost from the day of my landing, would be Home to me for the rest of my life.

X

It was February when I arrived in London, two days before my twenty-seventh birthday and three before my first appearance in England. My old friend Felix Semon, then attached to the Golden Square Throat Hospital and in only a slightly lesser measure to music, surprised me by holding out a welcoming hand at Cannon Street Station, whence I completed the rest of the journey in his company, the train ploughing its way, as it were, through an ocean of little brick and stone houses. Semon's eyes seemed to ask, "Well, what do you think of it?" But I was too bewildered for words, and when at last I found myself in the midst of the din and bustle, the commotion and the turmoil of Charing Cross terminus, I had a dim sense of having come to the capital not of England but of the world. What impressed me particularly from the first was the order in the apparent chaos. Everybody seemed to know his business exactly, to mind that and nobody else's, and to do it

without hurrying, without shouting, in a thoroughly efficacious manner. The clearing of my luggage through the Customs was a matter of a few seconds, and soon one of those "growlers" of affectionate memory leisurely conveyed us to No. 6 Chandos Street, Cavendish Square, where Semon had engaged rooms for me, he himself then occupying the ground-floor of the house, and the genial glow and warmth of the first English hearth-fire that night went straight to my heart.

Being of a rather domesticated disposition, I had already commenced to grow tired of spending so much of my time in railway carriages and hotels, as had been the case for some time past, and the amount of work I found to do in London and the provinces—for after my first appearance offers of engagements for concerts came in great numbers, weeks, even months ahead,—the ever-growing kindness of the English public, the many friends I had the good fortune of making, left little room for doubt that settling in London would mean settling in life, or, rather, that if I wanted to settle in life, this would be the time, and London, to which I felt myself irresistibly drawn, the place. To tell the truth, much as I loved dear old Breslau, beautiful Silesia, and, on the whole, Germany and its

people as far as I knew it, its music, its poetry, the sentiments I harboured towards those who ruled in the land in which I happened to be born—of parents with not a drop of Teutonic blood in their veins—had ever been far from anything like filial affection. Already in my early school days I could not help noticing the difference in the treatment, by the teachers, of the sons of rich or titled parents from that of humbler-born boys, who were looked down upon by the former, particularly if their fathers happened to be army officers, in a most irritating and humiliating manner. The obvious predominance of the military classes, the insufferable arrogance, indeed, of all officials, seemed to me highly objectionable. Bitterly, too, I resented the contempt in which the Jews were held in Prussia, evidences of which could almost daily be found in the Jew-baiting columns of the *Schlesische Zeitung*, Breslau's premier newspaper, and I remember how eagerly and enviously, and almost incredulously, I listened to the gentle voice of my first teacher of English, a sweet young Englishwoman, Miss Selina Sexton, governess in the family of a cousin of mine in Breslau, as she would tell me of her lovely country, where there was no position, civil or military, Jews could not attain to; where the ruling classes,

from Royalty downwards, were really the servants of the people; where talent and merit were the "open sesame" into the palaces of the great and mighty. I was very young then, barely sixteen, and the seed thus planted in the receptive soil of my heart was made to swell and grow by the second teacher of English it was my good fortune to find a few years later in Berlin—Miss Archer, sister of the late James Archer, the portrait-painter. That excellent lady had been called to Berlin by the Empress Frederick, then Crown Princess, to assist her in the founding and managing of the Lyceum and similar institutions by which that large-hearted Royal lady sought to improve the education and usefulness of the young women of Germany. Miss Archer was another specimen of gentle, charming English womanhood, and when, from what she too had to say of her beloved country, I found that none of Miss Sexton's statements and stories had been inaccurate or exaggerated, I began to pray fervently for the day to come when I should cross the Channel and set foot on that Earthly Paradise of my dreams—British soil.

Well, that day did come; and as I write these lines forty years later in my sweet Highland Home, now and then, through the windows of my study, "lifting mine eyes unto

the hills " I recall with a forgiving smile the reproachful question put to me by a grieved relative, " How I could have renounced the land of my birth, *which had given me my ' Bildung.'* " Did the dear woman really believe that Germany had the monopoly of that precious article, and that the unhappy man or woman born outside the Fatherland was doomed for ever to remain without it ?

Did Milton and Shakespeare write for the English, Racine and Molière for the French, Schiller, who in his glorious " Ode to Joy " sings—

> Oh, embrace now, all ye millions,
> Here's a kiss to all the world.
> Brothers, o'er yon azure fold
> Is a loving Father's dwelling—

and Goethe, Bach and Beethoven for the Germans only ?

The artist's home is the Universe, which indeed should be Everyman's, since we are all the children of one Father.

. . . . . .

I shall never forget the glowing happiness of those first days in England. I was utterly fascinated by English manners, English life, English country, English Sundays, even English fogs. For the young people of the present generation it will be difficult to picture a

London as it was forty years ago, without electric light, without telephone, without motor buses and taxicabs, without Sunday concerts, without Picture Palaces—a quiet, dignified, beautiful city with a decided character of its own, as unlike Paris or Vienna or Petrograd as the Englishman is unlike a Frenchman, an Austrian, or a Russian. Electricity seems to be a sort of leveller of national distinctions. The old horse-omnibuses had two seats on the driver's right and left, and to climb into one of those seats at nine o'clock in the morning, say at Notting Hill Gate, and drive leisurely—hurry appears to be a recent invention—in an almost continuously straight line to the City and see the thousands and thousands of men go, like bees into a hive, to their business there, a restless sea of top-hats, was to realise the greatness, the solidity of the capital of this vast empire.

To sit on an afternoon in one of those green chairs in Hyde Park and watch the long procession of duchesses and countesses as they drove past in their state-carriages, with a huge, fat, clean-shaven coachman in a periwig perched high upon a broad seat resembling the thing they put on a circus-horse for a fair short-skirted lady to pirouette upon, and two powdered, galooned footmen, standing like

statues on a footboard behind, holding on to straps attached to the back of the hood of the carriage, and exhibiting four irreproachable, white-silk-stockinged calves to the admiring gaze of the populace, was like having a series of *tableaux vivants* pass before one's eyes, illustrating a Dickens or Thackeray novel or —to a more youthful vision—some fairy tale.

The morning after my arrival was spent in delivering some of the letters of introduction I had brought with me, as the gratifying result of one of which I already on my first Sunday —I had arrived on a Friday—had the great pleasure and privilege of meeting, at a dinner-party in Kensington, the famous Alma Tadema, whose "Vintage Festival," only recently exhibited in Berlin, had created quite a sensation there. Crowds of people could always be seen standing before the picture, admiring it and, puzzled by the name of "Alma," wondering whether the painter was a woman or a man.

Well, here he was, sitting opposite me at the table, a man if ever there was one, powerful in body and mind, spirited, full of vigour, abounding in stories and manifestly happy in the consciousness of ever-growing success and fame; happy too, evidently, in the proud possession of a young and lovely wife, the rare charm of whose gentle presence enchanted all

who came in contact with her; she also was a painter, and that of no mean merit, though such was her modesty that when, after her much-lamented death in 1909, Tadema arranged a loan exhibition of her work, the quantity as well as the high artistic worth and excellence of her paintings, drawings, and studies came as a surprise even to her most intimate friends.

I was greatly attracted by the delightful couple, and with gratification recall tokens of goodwill toward me on their part, as the natural consequence of which I soon found myself a frequent guest in their beautiful house near the Regent's Park; and, in later years, in that larger and more magnificent, though never more genial one in Grove End Road, where they had weekly receptions on Monday afternoons and Tuesday evenings, the latter generally preceded by a charmingly intimate dinner-party.

From time to time special invitations were issued for the Tuesday evening receptions, and then, in that uniquely beautiful studio, the most celebrated musicians of the day, players and singers, happening to be in town, could be heard, giving of their best to a rare assembly of men and women prominent in all branches of science, literature, and the arts. On some

particular occasions, like the birthdays of members of the family, the entertainment would perhaps be of a more frivolous, though hardly less appreciated kind, performances, for instance, of prestidigitators or dancers, or else consist of dramatic presentations among which with particular pleasure I recall that of a charming play, *One Way of Love*, by Tadema's elder daughter Laurence, who herself took a part in its performance. Those were unforgettable evenings. Enjoyment was written on the faces of all present, not the least so on those of host and hostess, than whom none more genial and generous could be imagined.

Being himself of a happy, joyous nature, Tadema loved to see himself surrounded by happy people. On the other hand, being himself very strong, mentally and physically, he had perhaps less sympathy with the weak than his innate sense of justice and his kindness of heart would otherwise have kindled in him. That sense of justice he once afforded me an opportunity of admiring, which I think will be deemed worth recording as an illustration of his character.

He and Lady Tadema were my guests at Allt-na-criche, my Scottish home, in the autumn of 1905. We had been on a little stroll before luncheon. The day was glorious; one of

those wonderful, clear, crisp sunny days of which one in the Highlands of Scotland seems worth a dozen anywhere else. We were returning home by way of Loch Alvey, upon which, after having climbed through the woods for some little time, we came quite on a sudden. There it was, lying below us at the foot of the heather-clad, pine- and birch-studded hills, of the deepest steel-blue, bathed in sunshine, with the light azure of the cloudless sky above it, a feast of colour, exquisitely beautiful.

The moment we had come in sight of it Tadema stopped short, exclaiming in a sort of dubious, questioning voice the single word "Hullo!" and refusing to move on. I noticed his silence when after a while we resumed our walk. He hardly spoke at all, and when at last we had arrived at home, Tadema, though it was close on luncheon-time, sat down to write a letter which a few minutes later he handed me with the enjoinder to be sure and see it posted that afternoon.

Noticing the address of "Alfred East, Esq., A.R.A." on the envelope, I said, "I bet you, Tadema, I know what's in this letter." And then that slow, amused, contented smile we all knew so well stole over his features, and he told me I was right. Tadema, years before, on seeing one of East's pictures of a similar

lake-scene, had expressed to the painter—very likely rather decidedly—his belief in the utter impossibility of the surface of a lake being of so very much deeper a shade of blue than the sky it reflected. To-day he had seen it with his own eyes, and the letter to Alfred East contained the acknowledgment of his error of years ago. Such was the man. "But then," he said, "I have never been in the Scottish Highlands before!"

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The house at which I first met Tadema was that of Mr. Wertheimer, father-in-law of Dr. Max Schlesinger, the representative in London of the *Cologne Gazette*, politically then Germany's premier paper. Dr. Schlesinger, a highly cultured, most genial, witty man, who numbered among his friends Freiligrath, Gottfried Kinkel, Karl Blind, and other political refugees of the year '48, was eminently fitted for the responsible position which among other duties imposed upon him that of entertaining. He and Mrs. Schlesinger, who survived her husband nearly a quarter of a century—Dr. Schlesinger died in 1881—were "At Home" every Friday evening, when their comfortable house in that once fashionable quarter around Russell Square was thrown open to a cosmopolitan and most interesting crowd of people. Everybody who

was anybody seemed to go every Friday night to "the Schlesingers," and one told of the actual existence of a lady who, on hearing "Goethe" mentioned as the writer to whom W. S. Gilbert in the announcement of a new play of his, *Gretchen*, had acknowledged himself indebted for certain parts of it, was said to have asked, "Goethe—Goethe—who is he? Does he go to the Schlesingers?"

This evidently was *not* the one who, according to my friend Donald Francis Tovey, looked down with pity on another female because, in her opinion, that lady showed her literary ignorance by pronouncing the name of Germany's greatest poet to rhyme with "thirty" instead of with "*floweth*"!

In fulfilment of a promise given at the Düsseldorf Music Festival in 1875 to Walter Broadwood, one of my first visits now was to the offices and show-rooms of the famous house of which he was one of the heads. The business of the Broadwoods was then carried on in three adjoining old houses situated in Great Pulteney Street, a thoroughfare in the midst of that labyrinth of little back alleys east of Regent Street between Piccadilly Circus and Oxford Street. These houses, from cellar to top story, were filled with pianos large and small, and I was struck not only by their

quantity and variety, but particularly by the size and appearance of the "Concert Grands," which seemed to me longer than and altogether different from any I had ever seen before. Nearly all of these were built of oak, coated, like old violins, with a fine golden varnish which retained the colour and the grain of the wood. The joints of the keyboard case were hidden by bands of polished brass, fastened by innumerable little brass screws, and the lid was joined to the piano by finely designed massive brass hinges stretching almost across its whole width.

These instruments are seen no longer, at least not in this country, and I wonder what can have become of them, as they seemed to be made to last for ever. May be they have found their way into parts of the vast empire across the seas, there, in the durability and strength of which the wood they are made of is the emblem, to bear witness to the staunch solidity of the Mother country.

To me their memory is closely linked with that of dear old St. James's Hall, and those unforgettable Monday and Saturday "Pops," and if I were living in London, I'd now and then steal into Broadwoods' new premises, to have, in the little concert-room there, an affectionate look at the dear old uncomfortable, long, narrow, worn-out, green-upholstered

benches, with the numbers of the seats tied over the straight back with red tape, which the Broadwoods acquired when the venerable hall was pulled down in 1905. In spirit I even now sit down on one of these benches in the empty hall, and, like the old Count in *The Ruined Mill*, close my eyes. . . . Around me all stirs into life again: There is the fine old hall, filled in every corner, crowded even to the platform; the faithful Saunders is placing the music on the four stands and adjusting the chairs before them; the familiar attendants, a pile of programme-books in their left arms and waving a single one in their uplifted right hands, are walking up and down the aisles calling out, "Programme and book of words" —then a momentary hush—the stately Joachim emerges from the recess on the left, followed by the modest Ries, the solemn Strauss, the gentle Piatti. They gravely acknowledge the round of applause that greets their appearance, and take their seats before the desks; a final, clandestine reassurance as to being in tune together, then a silence as of the grave all over the house, and the four beautiful stringed instruments in rare perfection pour forth sounds that seem to come straight from heaven. So great is the spell that it cannot be broken even by an occasional distant jingle of castanets

and tambourines faintly floating into the room as below, at the Christy Minstrels, a door is opened. . . . But surely that brutal noise now striking my ears in the midst of the divine Beethoven Adagio is not that of either tambourine or castanet ?. . . ." Toot-toot . . . toot" . . . *a taxi* ! I am awake, and pensively walk out into busy Bond Street, ready, like the old Count, to shed a silent tear of affectionate remembrance. . . .

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But back now to 1877 and Great Pulteney Street, and my first visit there to the Broadwoods. At first it was Walter himself who, most genial of cicerones, conducted me over the premises, and well I remember his amused smile of gratification and pride as he sees me halting before a frame containing, under glass, a huge, beautifully polished disk of wood, and reading the legend attached to it :

Specimen of the finest Honduras Mahogany, in regard to figure & quality, ever grown :
THIS SINGLE TREE
contained 390 Cubic Feet, Broker's measure, (*i.e.* 4684 Ft. of inch) & was bought unopened by Messrs. Broadwood for the manufacture of Pianofortes, at the price of
£1781 : 0 : 6.
Supposed to be the most valuable Tree in the World ; & after it had been opened, it could have been sold for more than £2000.

"What a country I have come to," I thought in awe and wonder—"where they pay £1700 for a tree to make pianofortes of!"

After a while my guide was called away on business. Before taking leave of me he took me downstairs into a little private office, introducing me there to the occupant of it, in whose charge he left me for the rest of my visit. I shall always bless him for this introduction, for it marked the beginning of a friendship than which I have valued none more highly. I honestly believe a gentler, kinder, sweeter man than Alfred James Hipkins never lived. Nor a more modest one. For who, seeing him in his office at the Broadwoods, whose rare privilege it was to profit by his faithful and devoted services for more than threescore of years, up to the end of his life in 1903, could have suspected in the simple, silent man the learned author of several standard books on various branches of the science and history of music, and an unrivalled authority on old keyboard instruments, on which he himself was a most accomplished and graceful performer, and of which he possessed several fine specimens?

To leave the giddy world and repair to the delightful home of the Hipkinses in Warwick Gardens, there, in the genial company of

mutual friends upon a Sunday afternoon to partake of the spirit of simplicity, love, and harmony prevailing in the little household, consisting of father and mother and daughter and son, to listen to and join in the lively conversation from which anything even approaching gossip was ever absent, to see the look of supreme content and happiness in our dear host's face as, after a week's toil, he would sit down before his beloved harpsichord or clavichord and play us a Bach or Scarlatti in masterly fashion, has been among the purest joys of my life. Dear Hipkins! Not many indeed are the men of whom, as of thee, it could be said in the words of the Song Celestial:

> Fearlessness, singleness of soul, the will
> Always to strive for wisdom, opened hand
> And governed appetites;
> And love of lonely study; humbleness,
> Uprightness, heed to injure naught which lives,
> Truthfulness, slowness unto wrath, a mind
> That lightly letteth go what others prize;
> And equanimity, and charity, and tenderness
> Towards all that suffer; a contented heart,
> Modest and grave, with manhood nobly mixed
> With patience, fortitude and purity;
> An unrevengeful spirit; never given
> To rate itself too high—
> Such be the signs of him whose feet are set
> On that fair path which leads to heavenly truth.
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> . . . . . .

XI

Quite a good many houses there were the doors of which, after my first appearance at the Monday Popular Concert on February 19, most hospitably opened to me, and where, at regular "At Home" evenings or on occasions to which special invitations were issued, the best music could be heard, made by the best artists and listened to by more or less the same circle of friends. Notable among such were those of the George Lewises in Portland Place and the Henry Joachims in Kensington, the latter the headquarters during his annual visit to England of Henry's brother Joseph, who not unfrequently would make his charming hostess and sister-in-law, the daughter of the composer Henry Smart, proud and happy by leading a quartet or playing a solo in her drawing-room before a small company of friends—the ideal way of making and enjoying chamber music. Rare treats were these. At whatever of such assemblies I happened to find myself during these first months, I was invariably asked to

contribute to the programme by singing a few songs, which I gladly did.

I sometimes wonder if perhaps the distance from which we look at events that happened more than a generation ago, lends a particular lustre to them or at any rate alters to some degree the impression they made at the time. There certainly was a charm in those informal weekly meetings of friends at the houses of friends, which nowadays is not so generally found. One seemed to enjoy such occasions—at least so it appears to me now—in a more innocent, simple manner. Music was Music, Painting—for at all such gatherings these two arts were almost equally represented by their most eminent exponents—was Painting, and if people differed in regard to them, the differences were of degree rather than of principle. Excitement, irritation, violence as they exist in art-circles at present, were almost entirely absent in these " good old days."

The number of houses to which I was asked grew from week to week, and, apace with it, that of my friends and my delight in it all. " England " seemed to be the title of a new book of my life, the opening chapters of which were wonderfully interesting and promising; what an American girl would call " perfectly fasc'nating."

Every new dinner-party meant to me the making of the acquaintance of at least one famous man; and that at Airlie Lodge on Campden Hill, the town house then of Lord and Lady Airlie, was no exception to the rule, the famous man on that occasion being no other than James McNeill Whistler, doubtlessly the most talked-about artist of the day. He was the guest of the evening, and in that capacity caused much amusement already *in absentia*, for he did not arrive until some time after we had sat down to dinner without him, having waited fully fifteen minutes even beyond the then still usual *quart d'heure de grâce*.

When at last he did shoot into the dining-room, all of a sudden bursting upon the hostess with what I thought the loudest laugh I had ever heard, it was very much like Mephisto's first appearance in Berlioz's *Faust*—the zigzag flash of trombones there, on the single fortissimo clash of the cymbals, being no whit more effective than Whistler's Cyclopean laughter.

All through the evening he kept our small company in the highest of spirits by the truly dazzling fireworks of his wit.

Fortunately there was no reception following the dinner. I quite informally sang a few songs, and was no little delighted and, I confess, flattered when Whistler, on our going home,

proposed—it was a fine autumn night—to stroll along with me, and, before parting, asked me to one of his famous Sunday mid-day "breakfasts" at the White House, into which he had only lately moved, and where to those breakfasts sometimes as many as a dozen of his friends of both sexes would sit down and partake, among other good things, of "buck-wheat cakes with maple-syrup," one of our delightful host's favourite American specialities which he was very proud of having introduced to British palates.

My acquaintance with another American delicacy I likewise owe to Whistler. I remember meeting him one day in the Haymarket when he told me the secret of a great discovery of his: Scott's in Coventry Street had just commenced importing the Blue-point Oyster! . . . "My dear Henschel . . . delicious . . . sweeter than the natives . . . only a shilling the dozen." . . . And putting his arm in mine, he took me to Scott's then and there, where, in one of those dear old narrow boxes with wooden benches, of which I fear very few have survived in London ale-houses, we had a regular feast on the seductive bivalves to the accompaniment of I will not say *how* many pints of stout.

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Opposite Airlie Lodge there was a gate, nearly always hospitably open, leading to another house which I soon found myself favoured by frequently being bidden to: Moray Lodge, the beautiful home—I had almost said country-place, so little did the lovely and extensive grounds suggest the vicinity of anything like a pavement—of the Arthur Lewises, a most delightful couple of artists; for though a merchant, Arthur Lewis was a painter of no mean merit, especially as regards landscape, and a man the quiet attractiveness of whose personality may be gauged from the fact that he had succeeded in alluring from her allegiance to the stage no less captivating an actress than Kate, the eldest daughter of the famous house of Terry, who at the time of her marriage to Lewis had already, so I was told, attained to an extraordinary degree of popularity notwithstanding her youth. Music, Painting, Science, Literature, the Drama, Diplomacy—all of these you could be sure to find worthily and numerously represented at those extremely interesting and enjoyable receptions, dinners, and garden-parties for which Moray Lodge and its charming host and hostess were renowned. *Tempi passati*—alas—but affectionately, with the rest,

Deposited upon the silent shore
Of memory.

. . . . . .

If I was deeply impressed by English life generally there was one institution in particular which almost overawed me (a sensation which in some measure has survived to this day), and that was "the butler." I could unflinchingly face the powder of an army of liveried footmen, but when it came to the impenetrable solemnity of the butler as he confronted me in dress-suit and white necktie and with a clean-shaven face as blank as his shirt-front, I was utterly nonplussed, stupefied, annihilated. I felt like a worm, and as such, during my first days, would gladly have "turned" from many a door without carrying out my daring design of knocking or ringing. Few doors there were at which I bore that ordeal oftener and more willingly than that of the house No. 35 Wimpole Street, the residence of the famous surgeon, Sir Henry Thompson, whose wife I had the good fortune of soon counting among my dearest friends.

In her youth—her name was Kate Loder—Lady Thompson had been a pianist of no mean merit, having played with considerable success at the Philharmonic Concerts, at that time a test of efficiency and a passport to fame.

After her marriage to the yet unknown and poor young physician she had worked hard for years from morn till night as a teacher of the pianoforte, traversing London from one end to the other in all kinds of weather, doubtlessly thereby impairing her health which already at the time when I first knew her had begun to fail her. But when gradually she had to abandon all hope of ever touching her beloved piano again, and the creeping paralysis attacked limb after limb until she could move none any longer and had to be carried in a chair and, during the last years, even fed like a helpless child, her faith, her courage never forsook her. Her loving soul rose victorious above the ailings, the sufferings of the body. Never once—and it was my privilege to be with her very frequently—did I hear a word of complaint from her lips. Being unable to make music herself any longer, she found her happiness in befriending, encouraging, teaching, supporting young people, who, in her opinion, had sufficient talent to justify their hope of making efficiency in some branch of music the object of their ambition. The friendship of Lady Thompson was one of my richest possessions, as her sweet smile, her gentle motherly voice are among my most precious memories.

With wonderful rapidity I found myself

in the midst of the whirl of London society, and it was with considerable regret that, even for a few weeks only, I quitted the scene of what certainly had been most successful activity—I remember, for instance, one single day on which I had three professional engagements, one in the afternoon and two in the evening—in order to sing at the Nether-Rhenish Music Festival which in that year, 1877, took place at Cologne and was particularly distinguished by the first performance in Germany of Verdi's great Manzoni Requiem under the conductorship of the composer. Many German musicians at that time affected rather to look down on the Italian maestro with a sort of condescending superiority, wondering how in the world Ferdinand Hiller, the conductor-in-chief of the Festival and an excellent musician, could have chosen for performance at one of their classical institutions a work by the author of *Il Trovatore*, *Rigoletto*, *Traviata*, and other operas of street-organ popularity. Hiller, however, knew what he was doing. Already at the first rehearsal Verdi's fine musicianship and powerful personality made a great impression upon chorus, orchestra, and soloists, of which latter I had the honour of being one. From hour to hour we felt more and more strongly the fascinating influence of a master-mind,

and both the beautiful, deeply felt work and its genial creator at the end of the excellent performance—Lilli Lehmann was the soprano—met with a most enthusiastic reception. I had been particularly gratified by Verdi's great kindness in repeatedly inviting me to breakfast with him at his hotel. His cordial ways and unassuming manners, his peculiar charm of conversation when he *did* speak—for as a rule he was remarkably silent for an Italian—affected me quite extraordinarily. At one of the miscellaneous concerts of the Festival I sang my songs from the *Trompeter von Säkkingen*, which had been published the year before, and Verdi the next morning greatly gratified me by asking me to send him the songs and perhaps some other of my compositions. His answer to my question to what address I should send them was most characteristic. Without the slightest suspicion of conceit or affectation he said, "Oh—adressez simplement 'Maestro Verdi, Italia.'"

Altogether the Cologne Festival of that year was of a somewhat international character, for Spain, too, was represented by one of her most famous sons, the matchless Pablo de Sarasate. His interpretation of the Mendelssohn Concerto came to German ears like something of a revelation, creating a veritable furore, and indeed

I doubt if in lusciousness of tone, crystalline clearness of execution, refinement, and grace that performance has been or ever will be surpassed. Alone the way he took that little A natural, the fifth note of the Andante theme, without letting the string touch the finger-board—" sur le touche " I think is the technical term for it—gave one a thrill of artistic joy never to be forgotten.

From Cologne I hurried back to London as fast as I could, full of eager anticipation of my first " London season," for although there was, as now, great activity during the winter in the musical life of the Provinces, what, musically as well as socially, was called " the " London season did not in those years commence until after Easter. Before that, the only place in London where you could hear good orchestral music was really outside of it, viz. at the Crystal Palace, where the excellent August Manns every Saturday afternoon during the winter provided a wholesome and splendidly prepared fare of classical and modern music, being aided in this pioneer work of education by the enthusiastic George Grove whose analytical descriptions in the programme books of the chief works to be performed were of the greatest value. In London proper classical music was restricted to the afore-mentioned

Monday and Saturday popular chamber music concerts at the St. James's Hall. Altogether musical London of 1877 was very different from that of to-day. The names of Hubert Parry, Alexander Mackenzie, Frederic Cowen, Charles Villiers Stanford as composers were as yet little known, though their bearers had already commenced to come forward with an occasional composition, whilst of Edward Elgar's not a single note had been published. On the programmes of the Philharmonic Society's concerts, conducted then by Mr., afterwards Sir William, Cusins, there could still be found a goodly number of florid arias from Bellini's, Donizetti's, Rossini's operas, and the list of members of the orchestra contained many a "Herr," "Monsieur," and "Signor." Music was still one of the things which to a great extent had to be imported. A wide and lucrative field of activity for instrumental virtuosos and singers there was during the spring and summer season in the many concerts with which rich people were wont to entertain their guests after dinner, and it was at one of these private soirées that, the very first year, I had a rather interesting and exciting experience. The scene was one of those palatial residences in Belgrave Square. Two operatic prima donnas, England's foremost tenor, two

foreign virtuosos, a violinist and a 'cellist, and myself were to go through a long programme of music, commencing at 11 P.M. There was leading into the ball-room, which by the temporary erection of a platform had been converted into a music-room, a little ante-chamber, reached by the back stairs, which served as a green-room. This we caged lions paced impatiently up and down until our respective turns came and the faithful Mr. Saunders, the representative of Chappell's, who managed the affair, opened the doors into the arena to let us loose. We had just heard the applause following the customary high C natural of the prima donna's final cadenza when that poor lady re-entered the green-room in a state of great excitement, nervousness, and indignation, exclaiming on the point of tears, "It is too awful, they don't pay the slightest attention to the music, they talk and giggle—it's horrid," and so on. "You don't mean to say," I asked—poor innocent me—"you don't mean to say they talked aloud *whilst you sang*?" and being informed that such indeed was the deplorable fact of the case, my mind was made up. Soon my turn came: a recitative and air from a Handel opera. As usual I was my own accompanist. After striking a few *forte* chords by way of

prelude I began to sing. For a few bars there was silence, and then, at first from far away down by the door at the end of the room where it opened into another, came sounds of talking and tittering. Count Beust, a distinguished diplomatist and amateur musician, turned round—he sat in the first row—with a few sharp and solemn "Psht—psht, . . ." but hardly to any purpose. The talking and tittering grew louder and louder, and so did my voice. No use. With a few "bangs" I improvised an abrupt ending to the aria, inwardly apologizing to the shades of Handel. Amid the applause of the audience, the majority of which only by that applause realized that something in the way of singing had happened, I withdrew to the green-room, took my hat and coat, and in spite of the anxious entreaties of poor Mr. Saunders to, for goodness' sake, stay and do my second turn, left the room and the house. A few days later Mr. Chappell, who had already commenced to be what he remained to the end, my very good and valued friend, sent me a cheque with a letter he had received from the Viscountess at whose party the incident had happened, in which the lady reproached him for having sent her so rude a man as "Herr Henschel," and enclosing cheque for only half that gentle-

man's fee, since he had only half fulfilled his part of the bargain. I begged Mr. Chappell to allow me to answer that letter myself, and that night, with the aid of a dictionary—to my grammar I thought I could trust—composed a very nice, polite letter to the Viscountess, telling her how unaccustomed I was to such treatment of art and artists and sincerely regretting the cause of, as well as apologizing for, the apparent rudeness of my conduct. "With many thanks," I concluded, "I beg herewith to return the cheque, as I could not think of accepting a fee for my unsuccessful attempt to interrupt the pleasant conversation."

Much to my astonishment and, I confess, no less to my gratification the very next post brought me a most charming letter from the Viscountess, containing a cheque for the original amount and explaining the annoyance by the fact that, being an invalid, she was obliged to remain reclining on a couch during the evening and was thus prevented from moving among her guests and enjoining their silence. A week later I sang at another of those occasions, at Dudley House, when the programme was headed by a scroll bearing the significant legend, "Il più grand omaggio alla musica è il silenzio."

This novel experience of Belgrave Square

was soon followed by another, nowadays, I trust, quite as rare as the one just related. Coming home one evening I found in my rooms a large parcel of modern English songs and ballads sent me by a firm of publishers, and accompanied by a letter in which I was asked what my fee would be for singing any of these songs or ballads in public. Looking at them I found them one and all—I am speaking of quite forty years ago—of the cheapest, commonest stuff, the most sentimental, inane rubbish imaginable. I was much puzzled, indeed had no idea what could be meant by the letter. At last I sat down and answered, returning the parcel: "Gentlemen, I am afraid I do not quite understand your letter. If I like a song I shall sing it without a fee, and if I do not like it there is no fee would make me sing it." I afterwards learned that the custom of accepting fees from publishers for introducing their publications was quite universal among singers of both sexes, and I ceased to wonder why it was one so often in England could hear, even at otherwise good concerts and by singers of high standing who certainly should know—and I fear did know—better, rubbishy songs which would not be tolerated anywhere else. Such, however, is the gently persuasive power of a handsome cheque. But in this

respect, too, times, I am sure, have decidedly improved.

One more of my many interesting experiences during my first season, I mean interesting to my readers too, for as to myself I do not think I had a dull moment from beginning to end, I will record here. If a year before I had occasion to admire the charming simplicity and kindliness of Princess Alice, I was now to have an opportunity of wondering at the inimitable tact and considerateness of her mother, the great and good Queen Victoria herself.

Anton Rubinstein and I had received the Queen's command to go to Windsor Castle one afternoon and play and sing to her. After receiving us most graciously, Her Majesty seated herself near the tail-end of the piano, evidently in order to be able to see Rubinstein's face as he played. In the distance the only other listeners were seated, two or three ladies-in-waiting. The great pianist began with some Chopin nocturnes and other soft sweet things, which greatly pleased the Queen. After that I sang, and then Rubinstein played again, this time some louder things. I thought I could detect faint signs of uneasiness in Her Majesty's face as she seemed to realize the alarming nearness of the huge concert grand, the open lid of which threw the sounds back

in the direction of Her Majesty's chair with redoubled force. Then I sang again, and then, to my dismay I confess, for I had heard him do it before, Rubinstein settled down to the playing of Liszt's arrangement of Schubert's *Erl-King*. At the first outcry of the frightened child, "Mein Vater, mein Vater," I was prepared for the Queen asking me to close the lid, when there happened the most touching act, or rather a succession of most touching acts on the part of her indeed Most Gracious Majesty. Every now and then she would, unnoticed by the player, gently push her chair farther and farther away from the piano, the sounds issuing from which were growing more and more terrific from bar to bar, until, during the last frantic ride of the horror-stricken father, keys, strings, hammers seemed to be flying through the air in all directions, dashed into fragments by the relentless hoofs of the maddened horse. By that time, however, the Queen was at a safe distance, and a charming smile of pleasure and relief stole over her serious, wonderfully impressive features when at last, home reached, Rubinstein was half, and "the child" completely dead.

I had sung, publicly and privately, in over forty concerts. I consulted my engagement book and found the words London, Man-

chester, Liverpool, Bradford, Huddersfield, etc. already entered against dates in November and December of that year, and my mind was made up: I decided to move my "Lares et Penates" from Berlin to London, in spite of the wishes of an anonymous writer who, evidently alarmed at the thought of such an eventuality and in a spirit of disquiet less disguised than the handwriting of his letter, advised me to "go back to the Vaterland and dig potatoes"!

The first part of this injunction I obeyed, not however to dig potatoes—that I did thirty years later in my home in the Scottish Highlands—but to see my mother and sisters and spend a few weeks at the villa of my dear old friend Reinhold Wolff in the Thuringian woods, and it was there that another first meeting took place which marked the beginning of a friendship surviving, through divergencies of musical thought and ways in later years, to this day. Shall I ever forget that fine August day in 1877 when our little circle was suddenly brightened by the meteor-like appearance among us of a young and most attractive girl who was staying in the neighbourhood, the daughter, we understood, of a British General? None of us knew what in her to admire most: her wonderful musical talent which she dis-

played to equal advantage at the piano as well as by singing, with a peculiarly sympathetic voice and in compositions of her own, or her astonishing prowess in athletic feats of agility and strength, showing us how to play lawn-tennis, then only just introduced into Germany, or, to the utter bewilderment of the German young ladies, and young men, too, for that matter, how to jump over fences, chairs, and even tables, thus altogether electrifying and revolutionizing the up to her advent little varied though pleasant enough everyday sort of routine of our life. In one respect, however, we were all agreed, and that was that we had among us an extraordinarily commanding personality, a woman that was sure to be famous some day. And we were not mistaken. Ethel Smyth was destined to become, and has become, what must fill the hearts of British men and women with particular pride—the most remarkable and original woman-composer in the history of music. If some years ago her name has from time to time been before the public in a capacity other than, and rather removed from that of a musician, viz. as an active champion of militant suffragettism, the fact should perhaps be ascribed to the warmth of a big heart and to a breadth and width of sympathies found among the attributes of genius.

XII

When, early in October, I returned to England, no longer a stranger, I was much impressed by the grand scale on which in cities like Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, Bradford orchestral concerts and oratorio performances were conducted. Charles Hallé, to whom England owes a great deal of the subsequent development of its musical knowledge and taste, was then in the zenith of his success. He was an accomplished, many-sided musician, an indefatigable worker, and a very charming, kind, genial man. His "band," as orchestras were then still apt to be called, was as excellent a body of musicians as he was an excellent conductor. There was "no nonsense" about him, his straightforward readings being ever distinguished by a reverence nowadays only too frequently and deplorably absent. To change a *forte* in the score of a classic into a *piano*, as I but lately have heard done by a famous London orchestra in one of

Beethoven's symphonies, would to him have seemed nothing short of sacrilege.

What would he have thought of the modern wholesale Beethoven-improvers, and of those critics who calmly suffer such practices instead of putting their influence to right use by decrying the vandalism? Is there a painter living who would dare to take an old master whose colouring appears to him a little faded and "touch him up" by adding a little red here and a little yellow there, and exhibit the work as an improvement?

Poor Music, Cinderella of the Muses! In later years my experience as a teacher has confirmed me in my conviction that music is the art which suffers more than any of her sisters from the fact of so many people dabbling, not so much in the execution as in the teaching of it. Take, for instance, singing. Who would dream of taking lessons in painting from a man who can't paint? And yet there are successful teachers of singing—successful, I mean, in so far as they have plenty of pupils—who cannot sing and whose claim to a knowledge of the art is often found to be resting solely on the fact of their having at some time or other acted as accompanists to famous teachers or singers whose ways and means they have thus learned to know.

Wie er sich räuspert und wie er spuckt,
Das hat er ihm glücklich abgeguckt—

says Goethe.

How he clears his throat and expectorates,
That he has noted and imitates.

But to return to Manchester: my first appearance there took place at one of the old-established "Gentlemen's Concerts," a rather strange designation seeing that, as everywhere, here, too, the ladies in the audience by far outnumbered the men. My being asked to sing there seems to have been something of a particular compliment, for I have before me a letter from Joachim, written from the Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool, in which he says: "These concerts being as a rule only instrumental—this time Hallé, Piatti, and myself the executants—the fact of the committee, at Hallé's suggestion, being willing to go to the extra expense is a special acknowledgment of your art. I hope, therefore, you will accept the offer and telegraph a 'Yes' to Hallé. . . . And now let me tell you how deeply I rejoice in your success in London. In my artistic career nothing more agreeable can happen to me than seeing you—inwardly and outwardly—reach higher and ever higher steps. . . ." Of course I accepted, and Manchester became, musically,

a second London to me. That "Gentlemen's Concert" was not long afterwards followed by a performance, in the great Free Trade Hall, of Mendelssohn's oratorio of *St. Paul*, under Hallé's conductorship, and it was at that performance I made my first appearance in oratorio before an English audience. I still have the copy of the Novello edition of the vocal score, with the words of the part of *St. Paul* pencilled in, phonetically spelled, for I wanted my pronunciation to be as nearly perfect as possible. Needless to say, I was somewhat nervous before the performance; but imagine my feelings when on the morning after it I opened the leading Manchester paper, for which, as I afterwards learned, the late George Broadfield wrote the articles on Music, and read a comment on my performance, the giving of which here will, I trust, not be misinterpreted. I have made my last bow as a singer some time ago, and if I publish Mr. Broadfield's eulogy after a lapse of nearly forty years, when there can be no question of any material benefit accruing to me from doing so, it is because the article shows the remarkable sincerity, independence, and impartiality of the writer, then personally unknown to me, and also because its consequences had a decided influence on my career in England.

"Of the singing of Herr Henschel," it runs, "we cannot possibly speak too highly, and we question whether a finer display of finished dramatic singing has been heard during this generation. . . .

"His success last night was something more than a musical triumph. In the great scene of the conversion, perhaps the most thrilling number of the oratorio, Herr Henschel's delivery will never be forgotten by those who had the good fortune to hear it. One realized the humiliation and abasement of the repentant zealot in the half-murmured, grief-stricken cry, 'Lord, who art Thou?' Then came the more prayerful entreaty, 'Lord, what wilt Thou have me do?' Gradually hope tempered despair, and the great air, 'O God have mercy,' was a masterpiece of consummate art and intensely devotional singing. . . .

"If space permitted we might dwell on all other songs and recitatives in which Herr Henschel last night proved himself one of the greatest of living singers."

I confess I was deeply touched by so much kindness. Was it to be wondered at that my love for England and the English grew apace?

Soon I had to add the oratorios of *Elijah*, *Messiah*, *Judas Maccabaeus*, *Belshazzar*, *Samson*, *Saul*, *Theodora*, and others to my repertoire, among the "others" being one, Rossini's *Moses in Egypt*, which really was an opera. Biblical subjects, however, being then still banished from the theatrical stage, Sir Michael Costa, an enthusiastic admirer of Rossini's music, considered the work sufficiently

religious for an oratorio, and as such introduced it to the English public. Containing in most of the choruses and the famous "Moses' Prayer" indeed some of Rossini's finest music, it proved a great success, and had quite a "run." Edward Lloyd's luscious voice and "bel canto" style were particularly suited to the beautiful arias allotted to the tenor, whilst it was Sir Michael's particular pleasure to make Santley and me alternate at different performances in the fine bass-parts of Moses and the King.

Twice my professional engagements took me to Ireland, in the ordinary fashion, and on one of these two occasions it was an engagement—or, to be quite accurate, an impending one—of a different sort which took me *from* there in a manner extraordinary, that is to say, one generally reserved for persons of either Royal birth or Royal incomes, viz. by special train. This, needless to say, unique experience in my life came about in the following way: One Tuesday night in November 1879, I had to sing the *Elijah* in Belfast, and on the Thursday of the same week was due in Manchester for a performance under Hallé, at which performance my pupil, Miss Bailey, was to sing the soprano part. My dear friends, Mr. and Mrs. Koecher, whose never-to-be-

forgotten hospitality I invariably enjoyed when in that city, had on this occasion asked that young lady too to stay with them at their beautiful home in Victoria Park. The rehearsal to *Judas Maccabaeus* was to take place on the morning of Thursday, the day of the performance. There being at that time no express train from Belfast to London except at four o'clock in the afternoon, I could not, according to the time-tables, have left the Irish city, after Tuesday's performance, before Wednesday afternoon, arriving in Manchester in the early morning of Thursday, a thought which made me feel very uncomfortable all during the first part of *Elijah*. I would have given much to be able to leave Belfast after the performance that night, and gradually, as the time for the half-hour's interval between the first and second parts of the oratorio approached, that "I would give much" had developed into "I wonder *how* much I'd have to give." The moment conductor, soloists, and orchestra had left the stage for the refreshment interval, I rushed to a member of the committee with the question, "Can you give me an idea of what a special train to Kingstown would cost?" The man must have thought me momentarily demented, but after a while said, "I am sorry,

no . . . but . . . one of the Directors of the Railway Company is singing in the chorus . . . wait a moment, I will get him." "What luck," I thought. Five minutes later I was in deep conversation with that gentleman, who as an answer to the same question mentioned, alas, an impossible sum. I was on the point of most sadly resigning myself to my fate and giving up all hope, when a sudden inspiration made me ask further, "Is there no point on the line of the night-express from Londonderry to Kingstown at which, by leaving here after the concert, I could catch and join that train?" (It will be seen that I had studied my map very carefully!) A minute or two of silence on the part of the gentleman and anxious suspense on mine, and then he exclaimed: "I say, for a foreigner you are remarkably sharp—yes, the express passes through Portadown at 1 A.M. By leaving Belfast at midnight you could be there at 12.45, and I would telegraph at once orders to have the train stopped to pick you up." I grew more and more excited. "How much?" I asked. And to my great joy the answer was so eminently and surprisingly satisfactory that the bargain was concluded then and there. The bell, advising us of the end of the interval, sounded. "All right," my benefactor said, "good-bye, or—

no—au revoir—I shall be there," and two minutes later I was in my seat on the platform, a happy man, especially when the contralto Angel got up and sang, "Arise, Elijah, for thou hast a long journey before thee." "Yes," I thought, "and in about two hours I am going to start on it," and if the first words of my answering recitative, "Oh Lord, in vain I have laboured," did not perhaps ring quite as true as usual, the fault was to be laid to the accommodating courtesy of that obliging Director of the North of Ireland Railway. At a quarter to eleven I was at my hotel. "Bring me some oysters, please, bread and butter, and a pint of stout, I am leaving for London." "There's no train, sir." "Never mind, I am leaving, I shall be in the coffee-room in fifteen minutes." "Very well, sir," said the puzzled waiter, shaking his head. The changing into my travelling clothes and the packing of my valise were accomplished in a marvellously short time; during my little, much-relished supper a railway official presented me with the bill for the special train, which I paid (I have it still), and at 11.50 I was at the station, usually at that time closed and in utter darkness, but now lighted up, and my train, consisting of an engine and a first-class carriage, drawn up on the platform.

I chatted a few minutes with my friend, the Director, and punctually at midnight the little train steamed out of the station. Throwing myself into the cushions of my compartment I actually laughed aloud with pleasure at the thought of my success and in anticipation of the surprise of my dear friends in Victoria Villa, where—after being royally received by the stationmaster at Portadown, who had been telegraphically apprised of my arrival, and promptly conveyed by him to the express for Kingstown—I safely arrived on Wednesday afternoon, an hour before their other guest. Perhaps the most amusing part of the adventure was the fact that my extravagance paid itself by the utterly unpremeditated advertisement it had given me, the papers of the following day concluding their comment on the performance by the news that "Herr Henschel left for Manchester by special train last night after the performance of *Elijah*."

Of the fact that Herr Henschel's grandeur was of only forty-five minutes' duration, there was no mention.

In the year 1880 an event of extraordinary interest roused the Musical World of England to an unusually high pitch of excitement. Hallé, who had long cherished the plan of introducing Berlioz's masterpiece, *La Damna-*

tion de Faust, to English audiences, had at last definitely decided to do so, his daughter Marie having prepared an excellent and most singable version, afterwards published by Chappells, of the original text, a literary and musical achievement which no later translators have, in my opinion, succeeded in improving upon. The soloists: charming Mary Davies, splendid Edward Lloyd, and Mr. Hilton and myself, received the parts of Margaret, Faust, Brander and Mephisto respectively, in plenty of time to become thoroughly familiar with the music, whilst Hallé, assisted by his faithful lieutenant, Edward Hecht, the chorus-master, held innumerable practices with orchestra and chorus. On the 5th of February a huge audience, filling the vast Free Trade Hall in Manchester to its utmost capacity, acclaimed the eccentric Frenchman's *chef-d'œuvre* with an enthusiasm which must have amply repaid dear Hallé for the endless trouble he had taken in the preparation of the work, and been a source to him of the keenest gratification to the end of his long and successful career. A second performance followed, almost immediately, and a year later, in 1881, Hallé took his whole band and chorus to London, where, at St. James's Hall, with the same cast of soloists, the work met with equal success. The English

vocal score once published, other towns soon took up the work, the popularity of which has been almost unprecedented in this country. And no wonder. Quite apart from the consummate skill in the handling of all his resources, which one is justified in expecting from a master like Berlioz, and from the originality and humour that are peculiarly his own, the work, above all, abounds in a depth of feeling, which, having its seat far down in the heart, can, in music, only find utterance in *melody*.

Take, for instance, that sweet Easter hymn, the sounds of which are reaching Faust's ears from the neighbouring cathedral just at the moment when, utterly despairing of life, he raises to his lips the poison-cup that is to put an end to it.

> Why here in dust,

he exclaims,

> entice me with your spell,
> Ye gentle, powerful sounds of Heaven ?
> Peal rather there where tender natures dwell—
> Your messages I hear, but faith has not been given.

But the sacred strains continuing conjure up in him the memory of innocent childhood and youth, his slowly melting heart no longer feels strong enough to resist their appeal—he repents, and with the words :

Sound on, ye Hymns of Heaven, so sweet and mild—
My tears gush forth : the Earth takes back her child ! [1]

the cup drops from his hand.

The music here, especially towards the end, when Faust's voice soars higher and higher in unison with the melody of the distant chorus, is of such transcendent beauty and fervour, that the man who can hear it without being stirred to the innermost recesses of his soul must indeed be "fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils. . . . Let no such man be trusted." And, to mention only one more of the innumerable beauties of the score, that wonderful, mystic setting—the finest extant—of the Song of the King of Thule! Old father Haydn says somewhere, "A really new minuet I value more than any amount of contrapuntal craftiness." For minuet I would substitute "melody." To say that music without melody is like a flower without scent, would only partly express what I feel about it, for a scentless flower may still be a beautiful thing to look at. To me music without melody simply isn't music at all and if, when speaking of the first performance of the *Ring* at Bayreuth I ventured to confess to being bored by those endless monologues and tedious argumentative

[1] I have given Bayard Taylor's literal translation of Goethe's original.

duets, in *Siegfried* for instance, I do not hesitate to go further and, at the risk, I fear, of shocking some of my readers, to declare that there are passages even in the much-looked-down-upon earlier works of Verdi, like, "O mia regina" in *Don Carlos*, or "Eri tu" in *Ballo in Maschera*, for which I'd give whole pages of the *Nibelungs*.

The splendid, sometimes terrific part of Mephisto suited me to perfection, and rare were the occasions when I was able to refuse a repetition of that fascinating, sardonic serenade, "Dear Kath'rine, why to the door of thy Lover . . ."

XIII

It would have been strange if my growing success in oratorio had not called forth a repetition, for a while, of anonymous invitations of the "go-back-and-dig-potatoes" sort, but it was too late now; I was safely and definitely settled in the land I had grown to love and which, after having sworn allegiance to Her Most Gracious Majesty, I was, with the exception of the three winters of my conductorship of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, of which later, never to leave again.

My speaking of England as the land I had grown to love recalls to my mind a very neat and rather courageous thing a dear friend of mine, the late John S. Bergheim, once did in London. He was in every respect a remarkable man. Of extraordinary intellect and versatility and, though a business man,—and an excellent one—equally keen on horticulture, science, art, photography (a lens he invented some years ago is to-day known as the Bergheim lens), he did whatever he undertook with his

whole soul. Being also an ardent politician and a very eloquent speaker, he considered it his duty and made it his business at election times to attend meetings of the opposite party —he was a strong Unionist—and heckle the speakers, not infrequently with the desired effect.

On one of these occasions he was making a very strong attack on some of the principles expounded by the speaker of the evening, when some one in the body of the hall angrily called out to him, "Sit down, you are not an Englishman!" Bergheim, who happened to have been born in Jerusalem, but long naturalized, imperturbably asked the gentleman kindly to repeat what he had said. "You are not an Englishman," the man said again. "Would you mind," replied Bergheim, "coming up to the platform and saying it once more from here? For I have something to say to you." Doggedly the man—a working man—made his way through the crowd to the platform and, confronting Bergheim, said for the third time, "You are not an Englishman." "Well," shouted Bergheim, "let me tell you, *I am more of an Englishman than you are.*" Uproar of indignation, which having subsided, Bergheim continued: "You could not help being an Englishman, you were *born* one. *I*

have *chosen* to be an Englishman, for after having travelled all over the globe and knowing the world from one end to another, I found there is no better, no freer, no more beautiful land for a man to live in than England."

This time the uproar was one of approval and delight, amidst which the man confusedly returned to his seat and Bergheim was allowed to continue.

When some years later Bergheim asked me to accompany him and his wife on one of their annual journeys—that year it was to be Tunis and Algeria—I accepted the invitation with all the greater alacrity, knowing how so desirable an experience as seeing new worlds and new people would be rendered doubly enjoyable by the companionship of a friend as interesting and stimulating as Bergheim.

"To stroll with you, Sir Doctor, flatters," as Goethe makes Wagner say to Faust, "'tis honour, yea, and profit too." Bergheim's knowledge, moreover, of the language of the places we were going to visit, promised particular privileges and, indeed, stood us in good stead on several occasions, two of which, the one amusing, the other awful and alarming to a degree, were, I think, sufficiently out of the common to be recorded in these pages.

It was in Tunis. With the intention of

strolling through the streets on the morning after our arrival, on our way to the famous bazaar, we had hardly left our hotel when we were accosted by a picturesque Arab in white tunic and flowing pink burnous, a tall, handsome young beggar who, perceiving we were sight-seeing foreigners, doggedly importuned us to employ him as a cicerone for the day. He followed us like a shadow, reiterating his petition with every step, and nothing we could do would make him leave us alone, a most annoying performance. Our "imshee, imshee," meaning, "go away,"—a word I had learned among the first, having been apprised of its particular value to travellers in those parts—was of no avail, though repeated in ever louder voice and quicker succession; the rascal stuck to us, and the nuisance was growing more unbearable with every minute. At last Bergheim turned to me saying, "Now watch me and see what'll happen," and, all of a sudden, after the next solicitation, approaching close to and fixing his large and penetrating eyes upon the terrified fellow, he poured over him a volley of Arabic words with a rapidity as if he had never spoken any other language in his life. The effect was instantaneous and really indescribably funny.

For a moment the Arab, perfectly stunned,

looked at Bergheim with staring eyes and wide-open mouth; then, stooping to the ground, he gathered, with a quick movement, the hem of his cloak into both his hands and off he went, running, running, looking neither to right nor left, as if pursued by the Devil. And then Bergheim told us. The magic words had been one of those fearful Arabic oaths in which aspersions of the gravest and most damaging kind are cast on all the female members of the culprit's family, from the great-grandmother downwards, and he himself consigned to a place compared to which our European Hell would seem a sort of comfortable paradise. When a few hours later we emerged from the bazaar into an open square, we actually saw the fellow still on the run, far off—he had evidently spied us in the distance.

Difficult as it was to tear ourselves away from the fascinations of Tunis, of which the bazaar, acknowledged to be, also architecturally, one of the finest in the world, proved the most alluring—never, for instance, had I seen such a wealth of beautiful silk fabrics before—"Time," alas, "robbed us of our joy" at last, and we had to go; not, however, before having spent a memorable day in Carthage. Carthage! What a peculiar sensation it gives one to find oneself for the first time on ground the

history of which, dating back to centuries before Christ, deals with personages almost mythical and whose, according to schoolboys' ideas, wholly unnecessary names it had been a most tedious task to learn by heart along with the dates. I could hardly realize that in the ruins before me I was actually beholding the result of Cato's persistent "Ceterum censeo," and that whilst walking over the site of the ancient *Byrsa*, the citadel of Dido, I might for all I knew be accidentally stepping on a piece of that lady's artfully accommodating cowhide !

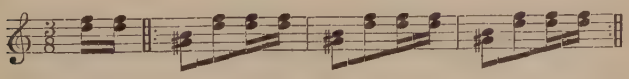
Constantine, too, where our itinerary called for a day's halt on our way to Biskra, proved to be well worth the two we decided devoting to it, on account not only of its richness in ancient relics and especially well preserved Roman remains—after Pompey's fall the city surrendered to Julius Caesar and his allies—but also of its situation, which is one of the most splendid imaginable. Standing partly on the slope and partly on the summit of a hill commanding a magnificent view across the vast fertile valley, the town is almost entirely built on rocks innumerable, varying in height from three hundred to a thousand feet, separated from each other by nature in the shape of narrow gorges and ravines, and connected on the top by man, that is to say bridged over by

hundreds of little gangways. Moreover, it was here where, owing to Bergheim's familiarity with the language of the country, we had the second of the two experiences I will now endeavour to describe.

Arriving at Constantine on a Thursday we were delighted to find that by a happy chance we had come in the right week, almost on the right day to witness—if indeed we should be fortunate to gain admittance, a most difficult task we were told—the performances of that strange sect of fanatics, the Aïssa-Ouas, who held their mysterious séances only once a fortnight, on Fridays. No arrangements could be made beforehand, so, trusting to the good luck which so far had not failed us, we set out on the Friday night, after a hasty supper—not wanting to be a minute late—for the place of the orgies indicated to us by the landlord and which, having once entered the precincts of the native quarter, we had no difficulty in locating from the low, threatening tumult of voices, more like that of wild animals than of human beings, mixed with the noise of high-pitched drums and weird, monotonous chanting that reached our ears, increasing with every step that brought us nearer to it. We wondered what it could be like inside if already yards away we felt every nerve strangely excited.

At last, in a narrow, dirty little side street we came to some broad stone steps leading to what looked like a mosque, and at the top of them there stood a very heavy, beturbaned Arab who, greatly to our discomfort, gave us to understand, in French, that there were too many of us, pointing to two other foreigners standing behind us, apparently on the same quest. He seemed determined on that point, and disinclined to listen to our entreaties, until Bergheim had an inspiration. Addressing him in his own tongue he promised him, in case of our admission, a sum of money for the benefit of the institution, and the result was instantaneous. The man told Bergheim, in Arabic, he would let us in if we came back in about a quarter of an hour, and then, in French, pretending to be immovable, turned us all away, including the two strangers. After having made sure of the latter having safely left the quarter, we returned and, Bergheim dropping the money " for the institution " into the doorkeeper's hand, were allowed to set foot in the sanctum. We four—I omitted to mention that a charming mutual lady friend, alas, like dear Bergheim, no more among us, had made up our little *partie carrée* from the first—and a French officer were the only " unbelievers " among the fearful crowd inside.

As we entered we faced a large court, ending in a semicircle and surmounted by a high cupola from which was suspended a large, many-armed chandelier, whilst two candelabra stood between the columns on the line between the large court and the two adjoining smaller ones on the right and left. In the middle court there were crouching four old Arabs, each with a little drum between his knees and a small cauldron with glowing coals before him, over which, from time to time, they warmed the skin of the drum to keep it taut. Around those four, also sitting on the floor with their legs crossed, were from fifteen to twenty young men, all dressed in white and turbaned like the rest. It was from those the chanting noise we had heard in the street, emanated. They were "singing" at the top of their shrill voices passages from the Koran, paying no heed to time or pitch, every one as he listed, whilst the drums unceasingly and in perfect rhythm repeated the one phrase that approached anything like music :—



Against the wall of the left aisle were leaning, in an upright position, shoulder to shoulder, and swaying to and fro like the pendulum of a clock, to the rhythm of the drums, a motley

crowd of Arabs, Moors, Negroes from the Soudan, Bedouins, and Kabyles; every now and then the outer door would be thrown open and a new addition to the number of fanatics press his form between two links of the swaying human chain and join in the movement, desirous of becoming one of the elect, as will be seen presently. In the right aisle, under a sort of canopy, was sitting on an elevation a tall, silent, serious man of great age, with a long beard and in the beautifully draped, rich robe of a priest, two younger men, equally silent and serious, standing immovably beside him on the floor. At the feet of the priest there stood a mysterious-looking wooden chest with finely wrought brass corners. Louder and louder, quicker and quicker grew the noise of the drums and the chanting, and from the moving mass of the men on the wall of the left aisle, describing ever-larger half-circles with their bodies, there commenced to issue deep sighs and groans, ever increasing in frequency and force until the whole building resounded as with the agonized moans of souls in the torment of hell-fire, more terrifying almost than what was to come. At last the climax seemed to be reached. From the line of the entrance there broke away a handsome youth of about sixteen, and, rushing past us, and halting before the

priest, made him, with outstretched arms, a low obeisance, which the latter acknowledged by a slow, benignant bend of his head. The boy then, turning quickly round and with his back to the priest, firmly, almost defiantly planted himself on the floor, his legs somewhat apart, his arms crossed over his chest and his head slightly thrown back. One of the two assistants then divested him of turban and jacket,—the boy was a Kabyle,—whilst the other ceremoniously opened the casket, withdrawing from it some sharp-pointed darts of considerable length. On the boy opening wide his mouth the man took two of the darts, and with them, to our horror, slowly pierced, from the inside out, both cheeks of the boy, who showed no sign of discomfort or pain whatever —there was, strangely enough, no blood visible —but smilingly turning to the priest made another obeisance, after which, with the daggers in his cheeks, he danced in perfect joy and happiness across the middle court back to the other side. We were of course dumbfounded, but had no time to reflect on what we had seen, for almost immediately there came another young man offering himself for sacrifice. Being somewhat older and stronger than his predecessor, he had not only his cheeks pierced by four darts, two in each, but also his tongue

and, above the Adam's apple, the skin of his throat, after which operations he, too, with the six darts sticking out of him like the spines of a porcupine, danced back in bliss sublime. He was followed by a third, subjected to increased torture, sought and borne with equal joyousness, and we considered ourselves by that time quite hardened, when an unearthly yell made us realise the rashness of the thought. It was a yell not of pain, but of transcendent, frantic joy, and issued from the next enthusiast who, evidently not content with the gratification those poor eight or ten darts in every part of his head could afford him, had taken hold of a substantial dagger, was now placing its point into the corner of his right eye, and making it move rapidly by rubbing the handle between the palms of his hands, caused the eye to bulge out of its socket—a fearful, sickening sight—all the while shouting and dancing and laughing,—I was going to say like a madman, but there was no "likeness" about it, it was the real thing. Imagine all these things going on to the exasperatingly relentless accompaniment of voices and drums, and in an atmosphere growing more and more stifling and objectionable. I think we were about ready to go, and only waiting for an opportunity of doing so unobserved, when the anticipation of the next

"act," by seeing one of the attendants take out a formidable scimitar, whilst an expectant victim was stripped to the waist by the other, and a consequent look at our ladies, who appeared in imminent need of smelling-salts, prompted us to dispense with ceremony, and, observed or no, a minute later—fortunately we had been sitting near the exit—we breathed a sigh of relief as the door of the Inferno closed behind us and we found ourselves once more under the deep blue dome of Heaven, "clad in the beauty of a thousand stars."

That night, at the hotel—I always was fond of experimenting—I borrowed a good-sized needle from the chambermaid, and forced it through the skin of my left thumb above the nail: it didn't hurt a bit.

The morning following we left, and the absorbingly interesting journey, by rail, from Constantine to Biskra, made us soon forget the nightmare of the evening before, in the thought of actually being on the way to the Sahara! I envied those double-headed heraldic eagles; to have been able to look out of both windows at the same time would have been a great advantage; though, as it was, the constant jumping from one side of the compartment to the other, so as not to lose any of the sights we were passing, as for instance the colossal, cone-

shaped tomb of the ancient Numidian kings, or some flamingos by the lakes near Yagout, proved a very welcome and wholesome exercise. The nearer we approached to the end of our journey the finer the landscape seemed to become and the greater our excitement; and just before El Kantara was reached, we felt, even if our guide-book had not prepared us for it, that something wonderful was soon to happen. Slowly and laboriously our train was wending its way through the ever-narrowing gorge. On the right and left huge rocky heights, from out of a recess in which that most graceful of animals, the timid, lovely gazelle would cast a frightened glance on us before bolting into a place of greater safety; now and then a little bridge over a rushing river, banked by palm-trees and oleanders, and now, with surprising suddenness the great Sahara burst into view, bathed in glorious sunshine. Another hour of exquisite sights, the rose and orange Aures mountains in the distance, dense forests of huge date-palms in the foreground, and the Queen of the Desert, as the Arabs call Biskra, was reached.

Arriving only a few minutes before sunset, we did not even stop to superintend the distribution of our various trunks and valises into the rooms they were to go to, but im-

mediately rushed up the three flights of stairs to the flat roof of our hotel, a fine, arcaded building in the purest Moorish style, and higher still, to the gallery of the minaret which gracefully rises from it. We should have been more than satisfied and happy with the overwhelmingly beautiful view on which our eyes feasted—unable to utter a word we merely looked at each other wonder-struck—but, as luck would have it, we had hit on the last day of the races, usually celebrated by what is known as a "Fantasia." There they came at full gallop, the Kaids with the *élite* of the different tribes, each tribe under its own colour, mounted on their spirited, gaily caparisoned horses, with silver-and-gold-embroidered saddles and broad stirrups, the riders in their flowing coloured cloaks all the while discharging their guns and carbines into the air to their hearts' content, for there's nothing the Arab loves more than that, the deepening red of the setting sun throwing a magic glow over the scene—it was actually living in a fairy-tale, as indeed every day of that memorable journey seemed to me. The market-place, covered with all sorts of merchandise spread out on the ground before the crouching sellers and alive with a white-robed, turbaned crowd—the call to prayer by the Muëzzin at sunrise and sunset

from the four corners of the minaret—the Moorish cafés in the evening with those handsome, naughty Ouled-Naïl dancing-girls in their gorgeous costumes and jewels, who when they get a silver or gold coin have a way of blowing on it and, with a quick movement, making it stick to their foreheads, which sometimes are completely decked with them—the witnessing of the starting of a Caravan, an event of which one is apprised by the unearthly noises issuing from the throats of refractory camels refusing to be laden—the passing of a regiment of Spahis, looking every one of them a sultan—the wonderful garden of the Château Landon with its acres of flowers and specimen trees and shrubs of all climes, which an army of gardeners keep in so distressingly neat a state of order that actually not a stray leaf blown on to the paths is allowed to remain for a moment (labour must be cheap in Biskra)—the visit, in a carriage, to Sidi Okba, with its venerable mosque, considered to be the oldest Mohammedan building in Africa, and the school attached to it where we for a minute attended a Koran class—one impression chasing the other in infinite variety. Not, however, being a poet, I shall spare my readers a recital of details, which from my pen would, I fear, be no better than, or perhaps even, more likely

not as good as a page from a *Practical Guide for Travellers*. So I take leave of bewitching Biskra, and from among the rich store of subsequent incidents select only one more.

On my first stroll through the streets of Algiers, whither we went from Biskra and where we made a prolonged stay, I experienced the rare joy of suddenly getting a whiff of the beloved Scottish Highlands, which tended to increase in me the feeling of which, amid all the date-palms and rubber-trees and cedars and olives I had been conscious from time to time during the journey—a perfect longing for the sight of a Scotch fir, the scent of heather and bracken. In the main street of the European quarter, over a grocer's shop, what should I read but the name "*Macpherson*"! Needless to say I rushed in, almost embracing the proud bearer of it, and buying a lot of things I didn't in the least want. He knew the neighbourhood of my home in Inverness-shire, and we had a beautiful time together. He did an excellent business on week-days, and on Sundays was the beadle of the dear little Scottish Church in Mustapha Supérieur, where, on the Sunday following, I presided at the organ, and, "leading the praise," singing the dear familiar hymns and psalms, I felt like the prodigal son come home. And now, Good-bye

to the land of Arabian Nights. I took away with me a wealth of exquisite, unfading memories. Nay, more; for, hardly credible as it may seem, even those few weeks among the Arabs—I made a point of not only watching them, but also talking to many of those who could speak French—have actually made a difference in my way of looking at life. The Arab impressed me as wonderfully indifferent to outside influences, quite unconsciously self-contained. Being a strong believer, in the true religious sense of the word, he thinks of his soul more than of his body, and the soul being always with him, it does not seem to matter with him where his body might happen to be. Hence, for instance, the utter absence of anything like hurry. (True, our friend in Tunis did run, but his hurry was, not to get anywhere, but rather the opposite, to run away from what he must have thought the fiend incarnate.) It is really amusing to see the leisurely way of an Arab walking behind his ass with a load on the animal's back, evidently not caring in the least if he reach his destination to-day, to-morrow, or the day after. He thinks, "What does it matter *where* I am—I am here." It really has taught me quite a good deal. Things that would have annoyed or irritated me before, I now almost always succeed in shaking off with the

thought, "What of it? What does it matter?" And as to running to catch a train or a bus—I never do that now, I simply wait for the next. But nothing, I think, gives a better illustration of the Arab character than the famous letter written years ago by a Kaid in whose province and among whose tribe a British diplomatist had been residing for a considerable period. The letter may probably be known to some of my readers, but those to whom it is new, will no doubt relish the reading of it more than, in all probability, its recipient did at the time.

The Englishman, intending to write a book about the Arabs, and particularly the district in which he had been living, wrote to his good friend, the Kaid, asking him to be good enough to supply him with certain information regarding the history and statistics of the place, and this was the Arab chief's answer:

MY ILLUSTRIOUS FRIEND AND JOY OF MY LIVER—

The thing you ask of me is both difficult and useless. Although I have passed all my days in this place I have neither counted the houses nor have I inquired into the number of the inhabitants; and as to what one person loads on his mules, and the other stows away in the bottom of his boat, that is no business of mine. But, above all, as to the previous history of this city, God only knows the amount of dirt and confusion that the Infidels may have eaten before the coming of the sword of Islam. It were

unprofitable for us to inquire into it. O my soul! O my lamb! seek not after the things which concern thee not. Thou camest unto us and we welcomed thee: Go in peace.

Of a truth thou hast spoken many words, and there is no harm done, for the speaker is one and the listener is another. After the fashion of thy people thou hast wandered from one place to another, until thou art happy and content in none. We (praise be to God) were born here, and never desire to quit it. Is it possible, then, that the idea of a general intercourse between mankind should make any impression on our understandings? God forbid!

Listen, O my son! There is no wisdom equal unto the belief in God! He created the world: and shall we liken ourselves unto Him in seeking to penetrate into the mysteries of His creation? Shall we say, Behold this star spinneth around that star, and this other star with a tail goeth and cometh in so many years? Let it go! He, from whose hand it came, will guide and direct it.

But thou wilt say unto me, Stand aside, O man, for I am more learned than thou art, and have seen more things. If thou thinkest that thou art in this respect better than I am, thou art welcome. I praise God that I seek not that which I require not. Thou art learned in the things I care not for; and as for that which thou hast seen, I pour confusion on it. Will much knowledge create thee a double belly, or wilt thou seek paradise with thine eyes?

O my friend! If thou wilt be happy, say, There is no God but God! Do no evil, and thus wilt thou fear neither man nor death; for surely thine hour will come! The meek in spirit (*el Fakir*).

IMAUM ALI ZADE.

XIV

During one of my earliest visits to Liverpool I remember meeting at a dinner-party a young married woman whose fine Roman features and fiery eyes unmistakably betrayed talent and enthusiasm. Whether for art or literature I could not know, having never seen her before, but was hardly surprised when after dinner she told me of her passionate love of music. She wondered if I would care to hear her sing, which, on the following day, I did. She sang Brahms' *Von ewiger Liebe*, and, on my expressing my delight at the beautiful quality of her voice and the true musicianly feeling of her rendering of the song, asked me if I would teach her. Needless to say, I only too readily and gladly agreed; the lady came to London soon afterwards, and "Marie Brema," the name, now famous, by which she elected to be professionally known, became one of my first pupils in England.

The season of 1878–79 was a particularly prosperous one in business circles. There had

been what I think is called a "boom"—huge fortunes were made in a short time and private palaces sprang up in the neighbourhood of Hyde Park like mushrooms. One tells of one of those multi-millionaires being informed by the landlord's agent that the cost of his proposed house must not be below twenty thousand pounds, and politely replying that that was just the sum he intended spending on his stables. At one of those house-warming parties I remember being present. The spacious hall and lofty staircase of the beautiful though perhaps a little too luxurious house were conspicuous by an extraordinarily large number of niches, destined probably at some future time to receive statues executed by the first sculptors of the day. On that occasion all those niches were filled with a profusion of the most lovely roses, a wonderful sight no doubt; in my diary, however, against the date of that party, I find nothing but the short, I fear somewhat naughty entry:

> House—Niches and roses;
> Company—Riches and noses.

A rising of the Stock Exchange barometer generally means a spell of fair weather to the arts, and the musical season proved to be a particularly prosperous one. Among the

songs and ballads I used to sing at that time none was more popular with the public than Schumann's "The Two Grenadiers," and few indeed were the occasions when, especially at private concerts, I was not asked to include that fine and truly inspired composition in my programme. In February 1879 it served as the subject of a rather interesting episode. The occasion was a soirée at Marlborough House in honour of the Prince Imperial of France prior to his departure for Zululand whence, alas, he was not to return alive. The inevitable "Two Grenadiers" was on the programme of the concert about to commence, when I was summoned to the Princess of Wales, who expressed a doubt as to the advisability of having that song, with the "Marseillaise" at the end, in the presence of the Prince Imperial. I of course was quite ready to substitute another song, but as I was moving towards the piano, the royal host, having evidently been told by the Princess of the proposed change, and remembering perhaps not so much the melody as the words of that stirring final stanza of the ballad, bade me by all means sing it, as in his opinion it would be "the very thing the Prince Imperial would like." And he was right. The young Napoleon, a very handsome young man, with most engaging

manners, stood close to the piano whilst I was singing, and when he recognized the martial strains of the "Marseillaise" at the end with the wonderful climax on the words "Then, fully armed, I will rise from my grave, the Emp'ror, my Emp'ror defending," his eyes flashed with excitement and, full of emotion, he came up to me and thanked me.

Years afterwards I was staying at Frimhurst, Farnborough, as the guest of General and Mrs. Smyth, when one afternoon Ethel and one of her sisters and I were asked by their neighbour, the Empress Eugénie, to come over and have tea with her. I shall never forget the impression it made on me when that quiet, still very beautiful lady showed us the Prince Imperial's room, left untouched ever since he left it for his ill-starred journey in '79. Many objects in it, like chair-backs or portfolios, had stamped on them the letter N with the imperial crown above and a Roman IV beneath it, and at one end of the room there stood on an easel a large oil-painting depicting the last moments of poor young Napoleon the Fourth. Standing alone in the vast veldt, he is on the point of mounting his restive horse; in the left hand the reins, the left foot in the stirrup, he turns his head toward the distance from which one sees the rapid approach of

half a dozen Zulus swinging their spears and evidently shouting their savage war-cries; his right hand is grasping the hilt of his sword, his face is pale, his eye full of fearless determination—a painfully impressive, affecting picture. I told the Empress of that evening at Marlborough House and the Schumann ballad, and she begged me to sing it to her, which I did—no easy task seeing before me the pathetic figure of the bereaved mother who, when it was over, shook my hand in eloquent silence.

Only quite lately I was told the source from which Heine drew the inspiration for his immortal poem. As I do not think the story is very generally known—to me it was quite new—I will give it here.

Among the guards of the Grande Armée who returned with Napoleon from Russia, broken in health and spirits, the shadows of their former selves, there was one who, before he went out, had been a well-to-do man, owning a little house with a garden in the outskirts of Paris. That house was now all that was left him besides a few hundred francs. On his reaching Paris at last, he went straight to a celebrated sculptor and said, "I shall not live much longer. Here is all the money I have in the world. I know it is not a tenth of what you are in the habit of getting for your

work. Take it and make me a statue of my Emperor which I want to put up in my garden." The sculptor, greatly touched by such devotion, refused the money but promised to do the man's wish, and the statue in due time, to the unspeakable joy of the brave old soldier, was delivered and placed in the middle of his garden. The poor, worn-out man soon afterwards died, and his will contained the following directions : " I wish to be clad in my uniform when I am dead ; with the sword on my side, the cross of honour pinned to my breast, and the musket in my arm. And in my garden, at the foot of the Emperor's statue, there bury me, *in an upright position, like a sentry.*"

The truth of this pathetic little story is vouched for by the eminent French writer and diplomatist, M. Paléologue.

Not many years later it was I who would gladly have been excused from singing a song because of the presence among my listeners of an exalted personage in whom I thought that song might conjure up sad and painful memories. This time the scene was Clarence House, the residence then of the Duke of Edinburgh. My wife and I were bidden, at very short, indeed only a few hours' notice to come and make a little music in the evening —" there would be only about a dozen people

besides the Duke and Duchess and their guest, Queen Isabella of Spain." The Duke who, it will be remembered, was quite musical even to the extent of being the leader of the violins in the Royal Amateur Society orchestra, particularly fancied a song which I used to sing a good deal when I first came to England, a song which was very dear to me too as an echo from my early youth when the opera from which it was taken, Lortzing's *Czar and Carpenter*, was a great favourite all over Germany, and my father and mother loved to hear me sing that indeed very lovely song, set to words—put into the mouth of Peter the Great—of peculiar charm and pathos.

In the first stanza the Czar remembers his boyhood, when he played with a crown and a sceptre, and from the surrounding crowd of courtiers and servants loved to return to his father's caresses. "Oh blessed," he exclaims, "oh blessed, a child still to be!"

In the second stanza he is himself the Czar now—crown and sceptre have ceased to be toys; his only thought is for the welfare of his people, but in all his royal purple he feels alone and friendless. "Oh blessed," he calls again, "a child still to be!"

In the last stanza he thinks of the end. The strife over, a monument of stone will be

all his reward, where he craves one in the hearts of his people. Alas, earthly greatness vanishes like a dream, and full of grief and bitterness he cries

> But when, Heavenly Father,
> Thou call'st me to Thee—
> Then blessed, oh blessed,
> Thy child I shall be!

Simple, touching words; simple, touching music. Well, imagine my feelings when, after a few Schubert and Schumann songs the Duke asked for that Czar's song! How *could* I sing it, with the Duchess, the daughter of the good and kind Czar Alexander, whose cruel assassination in 1881 sent a thrill of horror and indignation and compassion throughout the civilized world, sitting there in front of me? For a moment I was dumbfounded. I attempted to excuse myself, pretending not to know the song by heart. "Why, Henschel," the Duke exclaimed, "it was only a fortnight ago I heard you sing it at St. James's Hall!" What should, what could I do? Suddenly I had an inspiration: I would sing only two stanzas, and by melting the second and third into one evade at least the allusion to that sad "monument of stone." Extremely happy to have found a way out of the dilemma, I sat down and sang, imagining, however, I could

feel the fine, serious features of the Duchess grow more serious with every bar.

Hardly had I finished when the Duke sprang up, "But, my dear sir, you have left out the most pathetic part of the song!" and he took me aside and told me how the money for a monument to "his poor father-in-law" had long been collected, but as to the monument itself heaven only knew when it would be put up.

I really think he would have had me sing the whole song over again, unabbreviated, but fortunately it was getting late and there was no more music that night.

XV

During these first seasons I gave two or three musical parties, and I particularly recall one at which I had among my guests George Eliot and George Henry Lewes, whom I had repeatedly met at the house of Mr. Trübner the publisher. They were neither of them beautiful to look at, but, somehow or other, after a few minutes' conversation you seemed to forget all about their outward appearances. George Eliot had a low musical voice and a very gentle, charming way of talking, whilst with Lewes it was just the opposite, an almost ferocious vivacity, emphasized by his large protruding front teeth, which fascinated you. They were both passionately fond of music, and on more than one occasion Lewes, standing with his back to the fireplace, his hands in his trouser pockets and the tails of his coat flung over his arms, would make me sing one song after the other, excitedly shouting, "I know it's cruel, but go on!"

Robert Browning, too, was a great lover of

music. There was especially one song which he was particularly fond of and often asked me to sing to him, an air "Rend' il sereno al ciglio" from Handel's *Sossarme*, of which somehow or other an adaptation to English words must have existed, though I never succeeded in tracing it in that disguise, for Browning protested he knew the air as "Lord, remember David." I frequently met Browning at dinner-parties when, dinner being over, the lady of the house would have to send the butler to the dining-room more than once requesting the men to join the ladies; before we could tear ourselves away from the enchantment of Browning's after-dinner talk.

At one of these parties I remember a representative of the great inventor Edison displaying to the astounded company the wonders of that new invention, the phonograph, then in its first stages, with a cylinder in place of the present disk.

After much persuasion Browning consented to speak into the instrument, and chose the beginning of "How they brought the News from Ghent." Some of the company had now and then to prompt him until at last, impatient, he burst out into the words, "Bother—I've forgotten it." After a while the cylinder was placed from the receiving into the re-

producing instrument, and the awe and wonder with which we listened to the reproduction of Browning's voice, with him standing there among us, was turned into great hilarity when after a while from the uncanny thing there issued forth, parrot-like, the half-angry, half-amused exclamation above recorded.

Frederick Leighton, most accomplished and fascinating of men, was another of those who looked upon music as a never-failing source of joy and recreation. The musical evenings at his famous studio were not so much parties as services, at which Joachim, Hallé, Piatti, Mme. Norman-Néruda (later Lady Hallé), and other great instrumentalists happening to be in London, officiated as high priests with singers as acolytes.

Leighton's favourite song was Schubert's little known, beautiful, and pathetic "Nachtstück," which he often requested me to sing to him.

It will be seen that altogether I had what they call "a beautiful time," tasting all the joys of London life, of which the theatres offered some of the choicest. What a glorious period of the stage that was: Henry Irving, Ellen Terry, the Bancrofts, the Kendals, John Hare, Lionel Brough, Toole, Clayton, Arthur Cecil, William Terris, Mrs. John Wood, Mrs.

Stirling, to which galaxy of stars a few years later was added yet another of dazzling brilliancy with the advent of the incomparable Mary Anderson whose peerless beauty as Hermione and Perdita was a joy for ever.

Can performances like those of *School*, *Caste*, *Masks and Faces*, *The Queen's Shilling* ever be forgotten? Or the bewitching loveliness of Ellen Terry as Olivia, the touching tenderness of Irving as the Vicar of Wakefield? I do not think I have ever met a man whose smile was sweeter than Irving's, on or off the stage. I had the privilege of meeting him rather frequently, and often was asked to his fascinating little suppers on Saturday nights after the play, and when, in 1879, he produced an adaptation of Goethe's *Faust*, he did me the honour of asking me to tell him what I knew of the way that play was produced in Germany and particularly how old Döring of the Royal Playhouse in Berlin, considered then the finest Mephistopheles on the stage, interpreted that part. I remember, among other things, drawing Irving's attention to the fine scene in which Mephistopheles, hearing a young student approach, asks Faust to lend him his doctor's gown and, putting it on, receives the young man in the disguise of Dr. Faust and, as such, gives him fatherly advice which, how-

ever, coming as it does from the devil, is apt, and indeed intended, to poison the mind of the unsuspicious innocent youth whom he finally dismisses utterly bewildered and confused, after having written in his album the mysterious words :

> Eritis sicut Deus,
> Scientes bonum et malum.

Irving was delighted with the scene, of which I must have given him a rather dramatic description, for he wrote me afterwards : " My dear Henschel, you would have made a splendid actor, your ' student ' was delicious," and decided to have it in. He played it for several nights—Norman Forbes, I remember, making as excellent a student as did George Alexander a fine, manly, handsome Valentine—after which, much to our regret, it had to be sacrificed, being, as Irving said, " caviare to the public."

Having often heard people say that the frequenting of churches no less than that of theatres greatly aided in mastering the language of the foreign country you happen to find yourself in, I made it a point to go to some church or other once in a while for the purpose of improving my gradually increasing knowledge of English. Soon, however, I found that listening with the ear alone renders such improvement rather a slow process, and it was not

until after a kind providence had, one Sunday morning in the early 'eighties, directed my steps to the little Bedford Chapel in Bloomsbury, now no more, which stood at the junction of Old and New Oxford Streets, near the Tottenham Court Road, that I began to realize the benefit claimed for churches as a means of linguistic education. The picture which presented itself to my eyes as I entered the chapel stands before me now as clear and luminous as it did then.

It was a lovely spring morning. A broad shaft of sunlight pierced the religious dimness of the sanctuary crowded with worshippers, over the heads of which it fell straight upon the pulpit, and in the pulpit there stood as magnificent a man as I had ever beheld in my life. In a voice full of sympathy and emotion and wonderfully capable of modulation I heard the words ring out through the deep stillness, "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, thou that stonest them which are sent unto thee," and I stood spellbound. Not a word of the beautiful sermon, uttered with rare eloquence, dramatic to a degree, but never even verging on the theatrical, escaped me, and Sunday after Sunday I went to sit at the feet of this great poet-preacher, Stopford Brooke. Imagine there-

fore my delight when, only a few months after that first experience, I met him face to face. It was at the house of friends where I had been asked to dine one night, and as the butler opened the door to usher me into the drawing-room, there, to my joy, stood the admired man talking to the lady of the house, who at once introduced me to him. A concert at which he had heard me sing served as the subject of a conversation cut short by the announcement of dinner at which, however, lucky fellow that I was, I had been placed opposite him. If, some weeks before, his powers as a preacher had fairly carried me away, I was now utterly captivated by the irresistible charm of the man, simple, warm-hearted, broad-minded, cheerful, beautifully human. A closer talk after dinner was soon followed by an invitation to dine with him, and our acquaintance gradually developed, in spite of the disparity of age—he was my senior by seventeen years,—into a friendship which endured to the end of his full and splendid life thirty-four years later, a friendship which has been, as its memory is now, a source of infinite delight, profit, and help to me. Many an unforgettable hour I spent in the cosy den at the top of his house in Manchester Square, where, surrounded by his beloved books and

flowers, of which latter there always was an abundance in variously shaped vases and glasses of all sizes about him, he loved to work or, in his leisure hours, comfortably reclining on a couch by the fireplace and enjoying the fragrant weed he was exceedingly fond of, to receive and talk with his friends, none of whom I am sure ever left that room without being the better for the privilege of his invigorating company. And what a poet he was! His love drama *Riquet of the Tuft*, of which I shall never forget a charming performance by his daughters one night at his house, is a poem of rare tenderness and imagination, interspersed with lyrics of exquisite beauty.

Take, for instance, Riquet's song:

O long ago, when Faery-land
Arose newborn, King Oberon
Walked pensive on the yellow strand,
And wearied, for he lived alone.

"Why have I none," he said, "to love?"
When soft a wind began to fleet
Across the moonlit sea, and drove
A lonely shallop to his feet.

Of pearl, and rubies red, and gold,
That shell was made, and in it lay
Titania, fast asleep, and rolled
In roses, and in flowers of May.

He waked her with a loving kiss,
Her arms around him softly clung;
And none can ever tell the bliss
These had when Faery-land was young.

If there are many finer in the English language, I should like to know them.

Altogether Stopford Brooke was a great personality. Love was the keystone of his nature, Love and an indomitable Faith. Who can without emotion read his last letter to me—the letter of a man past eighty-four—written on Christmas Eve 1915, only a few months before his death? It runs:

My dear Friend—All good wishes, happy greetings and dear love, and every blessing from Him who loves us and lives for us, be with you and yours on Christmas Day. Think of me then and of our constant friendship, and give my love to your wife and Georgina. I am fairly well, and shall have some of my family with me. This is a brief letter, but it carries a deal of love with it.—Ever affectionately yours S. A. B.

It is good to think of him in the last years of his rich life upheld by this Love and Faith, unimpaired in mind and body, enjoying to the full the peace of the beautiful home he built for himself and a devoted daughter on one of the sweetest spots in Surrey where, in the garden among the trees and flowers he loved, his ashes are laid.

"At last," to quote the end of his own deep-felt sermon on the Fourth Psalm, one of the series delivered in the spring of 1910 at Rosslyn Chapel, Hampstead, the church of his friend, the Rev. Henry Gow, "At last—and may this be our blest experience—all is rest. The storm within has been made a calm. We have reached our haven after the tempest, and the ship of life lies under sheltering cliffs upon the glassy waters. Soft are the airs and still the evening sky above the soul, and from the land beyond the music of the heavenly host is heard. 'I will lay me down in peace,' the poet cries, 'and take my rest. It is thou, Lord, only that makest me dwell in safety.'

"So let it be with us, in this our later time, when trouble is doubled on our head. And then, when after many days the last and loneliest trouble arrives and the house of earthly life, dissolving, feels wave after wave of weakness break in that final storm upon the outward man, and the great shadow creeps on, while as yet its under edge is not coloured with the rosy dawn which rises behind it, in that cold hour between the old and the new, when the known is gliding from our grasp and the unknown is rending the hush in which the new life lies as yet unfolded, when all that is outward is undergoing this supreme disturbance—

within, as before in the lesser storms of life, there is unspeakable peace. The light of God's countenance is lifted on the waiting soul. The eyes of faith are radiant with it. Gladness beyond all earth's measure fills our heart, and in the silence we say our kind farewell to earth. The coming life arises even in the arms of death, and immortal joy begins its reign. Light deepens, infinite light. Then, on the verge of the eternal day, in that swift passage from the life of earth to the life of heaven, even while we die, we cry to our Father 'I will lay me down in peace and take my rest.'"

. . . . . .

XVI

Considering the great fame to which the subject of a little incident in my early London days attained only a few years after it had occurred, I trust I am justified in thinking it of sufficient interest to find a place in these pages.

I was sitting in my room in Chandos Street early one morning in the year 1879, when a letter was brought up to me, signed by Messrs. Harper Brothers, the American publishers, informing me that their firm intended publishing in an early number of *Harper's Magazine* an article on "Musicians in London," which among other illustrations was to contain a reproduction of my portrait by Alma Tadema, exhibited in February of that year at the Grosvenor Gallery. In that letter I was asked to "kindly permit" bearer, a "young American artist," to make a drawing of my London "studio" as an additional illustration to the article mentioned. The "kind permission" was, needless to say, readily granted. My "Show the gentleman in, please," was soon followed

by the appearance in my room of a short, thick-set, powerful young man, with a pair of very bright, clever eyes and a charming smile, who after the exchange of a few words and my invitation to make himself at home, went to work at once, begging me not to notice his presence. Before long, however, we were engaged in a lively conversation which his versatility—he also seemed to be very fond of music—his ready wit, and a sort of dry humour, rendered exceedingly enjoyable to me. Before luncheon the little study of my study was done, an excellent, wonderfully finished, detailed, very clever pencil drawing. I expressed the hope of soon meeting him again, and he left me his card: Edwin A. Abbey. That drawing, cut in wood—it was before the time of photographic illustrations—can be found in the February number of *Harper's Magazine* of 1880, and when after many years the famous painter wished to present me with the original, it had somehow or other disappeared; at any rate Messrs. Harper Brothers could not produce it, much to our regret.

Years afterwards, in 1888, I made in a hardly less original way the acquaintance of another man who to-day holds a high position in the art-world.

It was at the Accademia delle Belle Arti in

Florence, through the glorious rooms of which I was walking one morning, that my attention was attracted by a modestly attired young man standing before a huge easel on a scaffold and copying a large altar-painting by Andrea del Sarto. I had watched him already from a distance, as he appeared to be particularly earnestly absorbed in his work, and in coming nearer to him I was greatly struck by the uncommon freedom of his manner of copying. Most of the people who copy pictures in galleries you see bending over their work, evidently intent upon slavish imitation. This young man seemed to be looking at his objects—four over-life-size saints—as at living models, and having taken in just what he wanted for the moment, boldly putting his impressions on the canvas before him, spontaneously, as it were, with the result that his copy, besides being truthful in every detail, seemed to breathe the very spirit of the original; to such an extent indeed, that to-day, looking at it with the colours in these twenty-nine years mellowed down to a rich maturity, one would find it difficult to realise one was standing before a copy. Well, I thought how beautiful that picture would look hanging in the hall of my house in Bedford Gardens, which I had taken only a few months before, and ventured

to address the young man, asking him whether in making that copy he was perhaps executing an order. His answer being, "No, he was doing it merely as a study," I went further: "Would he mind doing the copy for me?" "Not at all—very pleased." The price asked being as modest and agreeable as the young man himself, the bargain was made there and then. I gave him the address to which to send the picture, or rather pictures, for there was another, smaller one, of two lovely "putti," completing the set, and he in return gave me his card: CHARLES HOLROYD.

So I had given a commission to the future Director of the National Gallery!

The pictures are hanging now in the music-room of my home in the Highlands, and some day I hope Sir Charles will come and sign them.[1]

But to return to 1879. My knowledge of London life and London society would have been sadly lacking in completeness without a day at the races, and I shall never forget my satisfaction and pride on being asked by a live lord to be one of a party to be driven by him on his four-in-hand to Ascot on Ladies' day. To be perfectly in style one had to appear at

[1] Since this was written, death has, alas, "untimely stopp'd" the hand of the genial friend.

that function in a grey frock-coat suit, and Mr. Arthur Chappell having soon after my arrival in London introduced me to a firm of famous tailors in Savile Row, I felt in duty bound to order such a suit for the occasion. In due time it was delivered; a grey top-hat, white spats, and a stout pair of Negretti and Zambra glasses in the regulation leather case to hang over the shoulder, completed the outfit, and punctually at the appointed hour the four-in-hand stopped before No. 6 Chandos Street. I am sure few people who happened to see a faultlessly attired young swell step out of the house and climb up to the seat behind the aristocratic driver would, under that disguise, in which, strange to say, I did not feel at all uncomfortable, have recognized a musician, and that really quite a decent one. I do not remember which of the many sensations of the day I enjoyed most: the drive to the course on that perfect spring day, winding, after having left the streets of the town, through lovely lanes between hedges of briar roses, and neat little villages, over hill and dale—seeming a realisation of some of Ralph Caldecott's charming pictures—or the picnic luncheon, or the astonishing way in which the phalanx of policemen cleared the course before each race as by magic, or the races themselves—the whole thing was one

huge excitement, a wonderful experience, "well worth the money," which in this case meant quite a good deal, for, needless to say, I never wore that Ascot suit again.

Somewhere, in one of the darkest recesses of my wardrobe, that grey coat must be lying yet, carefully folded and discreetly packed away, a reminder of youthful folly—my *Ass-coat* I called it.

XVII

It was in March 1879 that a thing happened to me which marked a turning-point in my life, offering at the same time a striking illustration of the fact that the most momentous incidents in a man's existence are often the result of accident.

One fine afternoon I chanced to meet in the street the wife of the conductor of the Philharmonic Society, Mrs. Cusins, to whom a few days before I had sent my regrets at being unable to accept her kind invitation to dinner on March 9, owing to a previous engagement. "*So* sorry—*do* try to come *after* dinner," she begged, "a very charming young girl from Boston is going to sing, and we want your opinion, too, as to whether she sings well enough for an appearance at one of the Philharmonic Concerts. . . ."

I promised to do my best, and little thought, as on the evening of the 9th of March I entered the Cusins' drawing-room in Nottingham Place, that two years later, to a day, the young lady

I had come to hear would be standing at my side before the minister of the Second Church in Boston, Massachusetts, who pronounced us man and wife. *Of course* Lillian Bailey sang well enough for a first appearance in England at the Philharmonic, which took place soon afterwards. Indeed I doubt if ever at those venerable concerts a girl of nineteen had met with a more cordial reception. In the second part of the programme—she had in the meantime become my pupil—I had the privilege of joining her in the duet "Caro"–"Bella" from Handel's *Giulio Cesare*, and when, a few weeks later, at one of those charitable Guild dinners in the City we repeated that duet, and the stentorian voice of the Toast-master commanded "Silence for Miss Lillian Bailey and 'Her' (his way of pronouncing 'Herr') Henschel," he was not very far out. In July of the year following the good ship *Australia* of the Anchor Line, sailing from Victoria Docks, London, to New York, had on board Mr. and Mrs. Bailey, Master Hayden Bailey, Miss Bailey and, indeed, "Her" Henschel.

A journey across the Atlantic was, thirty-seven years ago, considered quite an undertaking; to such an extent even that, for instance, when a young American girl embarked on her first visit to Europe, her friends would send a

bundle of letters to the purser with the request to deliver to her one of them on every day of the voyage. People, after the boat had left her berth, unpacked and prepared themselves for a more or less comfortable sojourn, on board, of nine or ten days or even, as in our case, a full fortnight.

To enable my younger readers of the present generation fully to realise the difference of a crossing then from what it is now, I give here verbatim the description in the *Times* of April 1914, of the then newest and largest British steamer, 950 feet long and of 58,000 tons :

> Public rooms comprise magnificently appointed dining-saloon, Ritz-Carlton restaurant, a reproduction of the Ritz-Carlton in New York ; tea-room, verandah café, palm gardens, a luxuriously appointed ball-room, equipped with a stage for theatrical performances. The state-rooms (fitted with marble washstands and running water), public saloons, staircases, four electric passenger elevators, and decks are remarkable for their spaciousness. There are also electric, turkish and steam baths, gymnasium, fitted with the latest Zander apparatus, and swimming bath, decorated in Pompeian style. . . ."

Now our dear old *Australia* was three thousand tons, that is to say, of about the size of a Flushing or Harwich boat of to-day. The dining-saloon was a compartment fitted with one table only, to seat about twenty-five people,

and the sleeping cabins, also called "state-rooms," were situated all around it, so that, if I wanted to get from my seat at the dining-table into my cabin, all I had to do was to give a turn to the revolving chair, get up, step across, and there I was. In fair weather that was all right. But in a storm imagine the sensations of those obliged, for obvious reasons, to remain in the seclusion of their cabins, with the odour, at meal-times, of food in their nostrils and the sound of rattling china and clinking glasses in their ears; or, on the other hand, the feelings of the more fortunate, brave diners, eating their meals to the accompaniment of the piteous groans emanating from the suffering victims in the surrounding cabins!

Some of our London friends had sent us various delicacies on board, whilst I myself, acting on the advice of experienced ocean-travellers, had a case of champagne put on board for me, as the wine-list, I was told, showed only sherry, port, and one sort of red and one of white wine, all the same price. The journey proved to be an excellent and rather interesting one. A smooth summer sea and the exceedingly low speed of the vessel made the motion hardly perceptible, and therefore highly enjoyable, and when for two days, owing to something having gone wrong with

the engines which had to be repaired, we had to have recourse to the sails—all ships still carrying sails then—the sensation was really delightful. Half way over the weather grew quite tropical—it was August—and we sighted a great number of whales, of which I distinctly remember one alarmingly near us, turning his enormous bulk round and round as if playing, and sending huge columns of water high up into the air.

There were a good many emigrants on board, among them a large number of Polish Jews, and one day there was great excitement, and a vague rumour reached our ears of a revolt in the steerage on account of the food. Now the food and cooking in the first cabin being really remarkably good, and the master of the vessel a very humane, kind-hearted man, we thought there must be a mistake, and sure enough—when the deputation of the emigrants, headed by a man carrying a dish of what to us looked like very nice, appetising food, laid their complaints before the captain, the speaker indignantly exclaiming, "Look here, sir, this is what they give us—sour peas," it was found that not one of them had ever seen or tasted that excellent and savoury dish known as "Boiled mutton and *caper*-sauce"!

Rather amusing, too, was a transaction I

had with my steward—there were no separate sets of them for table and cabin—on the early morning of the fourteenth day out. We had, of course, sighted land the night before, and now I asked him at what time we should be likely to land. "About ten o'clock, sir."

"How many bottles of my champagne are there left?"

"One, sir."

Knowing I should not be allowed to take it ashore without paying a heavy duty, if at all, I generously said, "You may keep that for yourself."

"Thank you, sir."

Well—ten o'clock came—half-past—eleven . . . eight bells announced mid-day, and there was still a good deal of water between the *Australia* and her berth in New York harbour. From moment to moment the scene became more picturesque and lovely. It was an ideal summer's day, August 12th, a brilliant sun, high up in the "raw, bleeding sky," as Henry James calls it, tempered by a lovely breeze; our boat looking spick and span with the decks scrupulously scrubbed, the brass neatly polished, the woodwork freshly painted, the awnings stretched across the decks; innumerable little craft shooting merrily over the steel-blue waters, huge three-deck ferry-boats furrowing

their way from one shore to the other, their whistles, tuned in harmonious chords, making joyful sounds—all fitting in wonderfully with the expectant joy in the hearts of the affianced couple on board.

"There will be luncheon in the saloon at half-past one," was the message the steward brought us.

Luncheon . . . "Champagne!" it flashed instantly through my brain. This would be the very time for it, to celebrate my first arrival in the New World. But the only champagne on board was my own, and that I had given away! To ask the steward to let me have it back was of course out of the question. So what could be done? I called him to me: "I say, will you sell me that bottle of champagne?"

"Yes, sir," with a merry smile.

"How much?"

"I leave that to you, sir."

And we had champagne for our luncheon, excellent champagne, at—fancy—only a dollar the bottle!

How can I adequately describe my first impressions of New York? Here was indeed another world, utterly and completely different from anything I had seen before or imagined, and those who only know the New York of

to-day will hardly be able to credit the statement that no more than thirty-seven years ago it looked more like a huge village than an important town. Broadway, its main business street, was only partially paved. Of the unsightly telegraph poles alongside of it, placarded all over with advertisements, not two were standing upright, some leaning to one side, some to the other; dirty little yellow cars, drawn by small, bony horses, passed wearily along the row of warehouses between which there were still a goodly number of wooden shanties, painted in all kinds of impossible colours; wooden planks still constituted here and there the side-walks; at nearly every second corner there was a "saloon" with its double swing-doors, characteristic in that they reached only half-way down to the ground, so that from outside the various legs of the people at the bar could be seen, but not their heads. Lumbering old stage-coaches plodded on, bumping and thumping over the slightly undulating muddy road—strange sights, all of these. To this busy thoroughfare the quiet dignity and elegance of "Fifth Avenue," with its brown-stone-front houses, formed a remarkable contrast, and as to dear old Washington Square, made immortal by Henry James' classical novel of that name, it seemed a

veritable patrician next to Broadway the plebeian. At 59th Street, the beginning of Central Park, the town practically ended, and I remember a little hut among trees, and cows grazing before it, on the site where now the Savoy Hotel stands. Through some of the streets the Elevated Railroad wended its way to the South Ferry, which carried you over the river to Brooklyn, whither every Sunday the great preacher and orator, Henry Ward Beecher, attracted so great a number of people that he was justified in answering a lady who asked him for directions as to how to find his church, "Take the Ferry and when you get out, follow the crowd." His eloquence was indeed marvellous. Not only what he had to say and said, but the electrifying way in which he gave utterance to it, was what fairly carried the people away, and I remember one Sunday his sternly rebuking his congregation for actually bursting into applause, as in a theatre, after one of his impassioned sentences. The music in American churches, often, I am bound with great regret to say, rather secular and unworthy, is generally supplied by a vocal solo-quartet, supported by the organ. The organist at Beecher's Church was then a young man, Robert Thallon, a fellow-student of mine in the old Leipsic days. His parents, dear old

Scots people, had when quite young emigrated to the States, where Robert was born. During my first visit to the States I was for a few days their guest in Brooklyn, and one incident of my visit is, I think, worth mentioning here as an illustration of the strange fact that when a man in the full possession of all his senses is suddenly and momentarily deprived of the use of one of them, the others, also momentarily, seem paralysed or to lose their keenness. Old Mr. Thallon, to set up his son in the profession, had furnished the young musician's studio, where he was to teach, with two brand-new grand pianofortes of the same makers, and I was invited to try them, which I did. They were indeed magnificent specimens of the piano-maker's art, and I expressed my delight and admiration in the most glowing terms, remarking at the same time that the one next to the window was even better than the other, having an easier touch and a still mellower, rounder, sweeter tone. "Do you really think there is any difference," asked Mr. Thallon, wondering what could possibly account for such a thing, as both instruments had been finished and had left the same factory on the same day. I could, of course, not explain it, but, trying the pianos again, was even more sure than before that the one next to the window was the finer

instrument of the two. "Now do you think," asked Mr. Thallon, "you could distinguish them from each other blindfolded?" I laughed to scorn any idea of doubt on the subject (how glad I am that neither the Thallons nor I were of the betting kind!) but readily agreed to submit to the task, extracting from my friends as the only condition the assurance that I should not be placed before the same piano twice.

Securely and effectively blindfolded, and, in addition, with my eyes tightly closed beneath the bandage, I was in deepest, blackest darkness led to one of the pianos and played on it. Immediately I had made up my mind as to which of them I was playing on. Then I was conducted to the other. I sat down and played —played—played again, and was confused. "You are not deceiving me?" I asked, "I have played both pianos?" Old Mr. Thallon pledged his word of honour. I begged to be allowed to try once more both pianos. To make a long story short, not if my life had depended on it could I have told the difference.

How can this be explained? Could it possibly have been that when I played the two instruments with all my senses unimpaired, the greater light in which one of them—that by the window—stood, had affected my judgment in regard to it? The experience certainly was

so remarkable and strange that I think it would be worth while for a man of science to make similar experiments with a view to solving what to me seemed quite an extraordinary phenomenon.

On my way to Haydenville in Massachusetts, the old homestead of my fiancée's family on the mother's side, I made a few days' halt in Boston, whither the Baileys had removed from Columbus in Ohio, the birthplace of their daughter, when that young lady was quite a little child.

"How otherwise upon me works *this* sign!" I could exclaim with Goethe's Faust. How different the impression Boston made on me as compared to that of New York! In the first place the streets had names, not numbers. Somehow or other "Mount Vernon Street," "Boylston Street," "Tremont Street" does sound more homely than East 10th or West 11th, practical as the latter denomination may perhaps be from a commercial standpoint. And then the "down-town," *i.e.* business part of the city: narrow streets and crooked lanes, a dear old church with a beautiful portico, still called the "King's Chapel," the old State-house, with the Lion and the Unicorn still in its gable, the "Old Corner Book-store," and numerous other old-world landmarks—all this

made me feel quite at home. And indeed only a little more than a year later Boston did become a home where I was to spend three happy and prosperous years.

How this came about I will tell when I return from England, whither I had to sail before long, to sing at the Leeds Festival. London in September being what they call "empty," I did not expect to find any of my friends there, and was therefore doubly glad when, stopping at Queenstown and the mail being brought on board together with the customary fresh supply of fish—people who after a week's voyage from New York have experienced the delight of a meal on freshly caught "Prime English Sole" will appreciate this reference to an eagerly looked-for and most welcome change in the ship's bill of fare,—there was among my letters one from Dr. Schlesinger, characteristic of his never-failing humour:

"My dear Friend," he writes, "Of all the people whom you had left behind, I am the only one that has held out in London till now. The horrid Orient question, to which I am sure neither you nor Lillian have ever given a thought, kept me tied here, whilst the other friends were roaming through the world and my wife is attempting an ascent of Mont-Blanc.[1] Gradually the travellers return. You too, dear

[1] His way of intimating that his wife was in Switzerland.

fugitive, even if only for a short time. Welcome to old Europe. With the exception of the Cologne Cathedral which, at considerable expense and trouble, I have completed in your absence, you will find everything pretty much as you left it: the climate, morals, Sir Julius (Benedict), the British constitution, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the noble art of music. Tadema has had his floors so scrubbed and polished as to make them accessible only to mountaineers accustomed to glacier-climbing. Sylvia[1] is more reckless than ever; the old Kaiser getting younger, Mrs. J. . . . prettier, I older and the Greek question more complicated from day to day. To escape the fogs we are going to Brighton where various arms are always open for your reception. Myself however you will find most days of the week in town, either at my office in the Strand or at the Garrick or else worshipping in some modest little church.[2] Let me see your face before you swim back to your Lillian and the redskins of the West. . . ."

To Brighton, therefore, at that time perhaps even more than it is now the favourite resort of busy Londoners in want of a change of air and surroundings, I went, glad ever after for having done so, for I was never again to see the face of the dear, genial friend who died a few months later whilst I was in Boston. Thither I hurried after the Leeds Festival, equipped with letters of introduction from

[1] One of his daughters, a charming young lady of a particularly gentle and retiring disposition.

[2] I doubt if he had ever been inside one for that purpose.

Robert Browning to Charles Perkins, a Boston philanthropist, and from Lord Houghton to Longfellow. Lord Houghton, one of the house-party at Elmete Hall, Sir James Kitson's seat near Leeds, where I, too, was staying during the Festival week, had greatly impressed me, not only by his personality, which—without an actual resemblance—somehow reminded me of the famous Seneca bust in Naples, but also by the animation and wit of his conversation and by the peculiarly clear and precise manner in which he gave utterance, now and then in a poetical phrase, to what he had to say.

XVIII

Accredited by such people to their friends in the new world, I was now doubly eager to return to Boston, which had already attracted me so much at first sight. Renowned as a seat of learning—Cambridge with its Harvard University being practically part of it,—it was then not only the home of men like Longfellow, Oliver Wendell Holmes, William Dean Howells, Thomas Bailey Aldrich, James Russell Lowell, Henry James, then still "jr.," but also acknowledged as the musical centre of the United States. Among the numerous institutions which provided the good people of Boston with music of the best kind were the still flourishing Handel and Haydn Society, originally founded for the performance of choral works of the two masters whose names it bore, and the Harvard Musical Society, both under the conductorship of Carl Zerrahn, an able and conscientious Kapellmeister of the good old German type. The members of the orchestra of the Harvard Musical Society had grown old with it, a fact

which naturally led to a gradual lessening of the technical and intellectual power of interpretation and, consequently, to a decrease of attraction as regards the public. Their last orchestral concert of the season 1880–81 happening to fall upon a date only a week or two previous to my marriage to Miss Bailey, she and I thought it would be a nice thing to offer our joint services as soloists on that occasion. The offer was made and gratefully accepted and, as a counter-compliment, I was asked to conduct, at that same concert, one of my own works. I chose a MS. Concert-Overture in D Minor, an early and rather poor composition which, after its subsequent performance in London under Hans Richter a year or so later, I promptly destroyed. Whether it was that I had succeeded in imparting some of my youthful enthusiasm to the aged band, or that the players were determined to show the newcomer what they were capable of in an emergency, the performance certainly went exceedingly well, and had not only considerable success but, as will be seen, far-reaching consequences.

There was among the audience on that night one who, although a keen business man, partner in the old-established, highly respected banking firm of Lee Higginson & Co., had a very deep

affection for music, in fact had as a young man spent some time in Vienna for the purpose of studying that art with a view to making it—in the first place through the means of the pianoforte—his profession, and only been prevented from carrying out his intention by an accident to one of his arms. Colonel Henry Lee Higginson—for after his return from Vienna he had served in the United States Volunteers during the Civil War, becoming Major and Brevet Lt.-Colonel in the 1st Massachusetts Cavalry, and being severely wounded at Aldie in Virginia in 1863—was and, I am happy to add, still is one of those high-minded, public-spirited men of whom any community might well be proud. Fearless, just, kind, upright, and honourable in every fibre of his being, he cared for the good of the Commonwealth as much as for that of his own flesh and blood. His wife, a daughter of the great scientist, Louis Agassiz, was one of a small circle of ladies who held what in France they call a "salon," at whose afternoon teas the representatives—resident or transitory—of art and science, music and literature, used to meet and discuss the events and questions of the day. These highly cultured women, among whom I recall with delight dear old Mrs. Julia Ward Howe, the authoress of that stirring battle-

hymn of the Republic, "Mine eyes have seen the glory of the Coming of the Lord," Mrs. George D. Howe, witty Mrs. Bell and her sister, Mrs. Pratt, Mrs. John L.—familiarly Mrs. Jack—Gardner, were the leaders of what certainly was society in the highest and best meaning of the word. Mrs. Gardner, by the way, afterwards built that wonderful Italian palace, "Fenway Court," in Boston, a unique manifestation in stone of genius in woman, demonstrating what a discriminating love and knowledge of art, combined with perseverance and wealth, and united in and guided by one and the same mind, can accomplish.

Mentioning the name of Julia Ward Howe recalls to my mind an incident during my Boston days which, considering its consequences, will, I think, be deemed of more than local interest.

Among the young men living in Boston in the early 'eighties there was a nephew of Mrs. Howe's who seemed to have given his aunt and his guardians—his parents were both dead —considerable anxiety as to his future. He was of extraordinary physical beauty both as regards face and figure. So might a Greek statue of a Roman youth have looked, come to life and put into modern clothes, and I wonder if this fact may not perhaps to some extent

have accounted for his seeming somewhat spoiled, very likely by doting relatives and admiring friends, especially of the fair sex. Certain it was that all efforts to make him work and choose a profession appeared to have failed so far. The last attempt in this direction had been journalism in India, from which country the young man had just returned at the time I met him, handsomer and more unemployed than ever. Mrs. Howe and others interested in him, among them an uncle of his, were at a loss to know what to do with him, whose tastes in dress and food, and living altogether, were sadly out of proportion to his means of gratifying them, when it suddenly occurred to some of them that perhaps he might become a professional singer, for he had a certain amount of musical talent and was possessed of a baritone voice of good compass and rather agreeable quality, having, I heard, often given pleasure to a small company of friends, by the singing of an occasional Schubert song. So I was approached in the matter. After being made fully to understand and appreciate the seriousness and importance of the question and the responsibility which rested on them and me, I was asked to hear him sing, test his musical and vocal capabilities, and give my opinion as to the advisability of

his studying music—and singing in particular—with a view to making a profession of it. The young man himself was very keen on the subject, and it was with genuine regret that, after hearing and thoroughly examining him, I had to break to him my conviction that it would be of no use : he could not sing, nor, in my opinion, be made to sing, in perfect tune, and must give up all dreams of ever becoming a singer or of making a living by music. His disappointment at seeing shattered what seemed his last hope—for he was getting on in years, being then twenty-seven—was pathetic. His handsome eyes, dimmed with tears, seemed to look into the future with something like despair, and I could not help being truly sorry for him, little thinking that my verdict would prove a blessing in disguise. We went together to his aunt, with whom was the aforesaid uncle. After my report on the fatal examination there was a sad silence. Then the uncle said to the downcast young man, " Why don't you write down that little story you told me some time ago of that strange experience you had in India —don't you know ? . . ." Somehow or other the suggestion seemed to commend itself to the nephew, who parted from me hopeful and with my best wishes. That was in January 1882. At Christmas of that year the novel-reading

public of Great Britain and the United States were devouring a little book, *Mr. Isaacs*, by F. Marion Crawford, and when, many years later, I met the author in Sorrento, where his steadily growing success had enabled him to surround himself with all the comfort and luxury of a beautiful home, he gratefully reminded me of that awful afternoon in Boston, when my stern decree had unconsciously laid the foundation of it.

It was at the house of Mrs. Geo. D. Howe that, a few days after that concert of the Harvard Musical Society, Colonel Higginson asked me to meet him; and there, in a few words, as was his wont, he revealed to me his plan of establishing in Boston, on a firm, financial basis, an annual series of orchestral concerts on a large scale, and asked me if, eventually, I would undertake to form the new orchestra and be its first conductor. There would be no committee. I would be my own master as regards the making of the programmes, number of rehearsals, indeed in every respect. He also hinted at a very substantial salary, being, as he remarked, sensible of the fact that such a position would naturally not leave me as free to earn as much by my singing as would otherwise be the case.

The offer was a very tempting one, especially

since the regular conducting of a big symphony orchestra had for a long time been one of my ambitions, but there was the question of casting myself—perhaps for good—adrift from so much that was dear to me in Europe, and I begged to be allowed to think the matter over.

Two days after my marriage, it was in Washington, where part of our honeymoon was spent, I received a telegram from Colonel Higginson, followed by a letter, in which he definitely offered me the post. And since we had already in our first interview agreed that it would be better for us not to bind ourselves for more than a year, thus giving, after the expiration of it, each of us the option of either renewing or discontinuing the agreement, I accepted. All details were settled upon after my return to Boston. I engaged the members of the orchestra, selecting them, at Mr. Higginson's very wise suggestion, as nearly as possible from those of the old Harvard Society and among other local players, so as not to arouse too much opposition.

During my visit to Germany I bought a very extensive orchestral library, taking great pleasure and pride in personally indexing and cataloguing the nearly three hundred works I had acquired. Rehearsals commenced early in October, and on the 22nd of that month

the "Boston Symphony Orchestra," as with Colonel Higginson's assent I had christened it, was launched on its public career and I became, for the time being, a resident of the United States.

XIX

How different an aspect things assume when looked at from different points of view! To see a foreign country as a visitor of a few weeks is one thing; to find oneself established in it and move among its people as one of their number, quite another. I had to get accustomed to many things which at first simply amused me, as, for instance, the familiarity with which people—or perhaps I should rather say men—treated each other, independent of their social status. Things may have changed since then, but I remember an incident which furnishes a particularly striking illustration of that trait in the American of forty years ago. It was in one of those little yellow horse-tram-cars in New York. A man had just entered the car, and in handing his fare to the conductor asked to be put down at the corner of "So-and-so Street." The conductor looked puzzled; doubtfully repeating the name of the street, he shook his head and, after a little more thinking, turned to us other men in the car with the

question: "Does any one *of you chaps* know So-and-so Street?" Fancy such a thing happening in a London bus!

In referring once to some member of the household staff in the old Haydenville establishment as "servant," that word was gently corrected into "help," a circumstance which with considerable amusement I recollected when calling, twenty-five years later, upon a friend staying at one of the newest, up-to-date hotels in New York, and seeing with my own eyes half-a-dozen powdered "helps" in gorgeous liveries, loitering in the lobby!

In some private houses and most of the hotels then they had "coloured help," or in other words, negro servants, and somehow or other you didn't mind *their* familiarity half as much as that of white people. On one occasion it was vastly exhilarating. My wife and I were staying at a hotel in Philadelphia, and, having a recital in the evening, took our dinner in the public dining-room, but by ourselves, two hours before the official dinner-hour. We were the only guests in the room, and had the honour of being served by the head waiter, a highly elegant, faultlessly attired, nice-looking, polite negro. He was scrupulously attentive to us, and must have known our identity, for when we had finished our meal and got up to

leave the room, he courteously removed our chairs, and, a broad smile brightening up his countenance in which, but for the duskiness of it, I am sure I would have been able to discover a faint blush, said to us: "I hope you'll have a great success to-night—*I've been in the show-business myself*"!

There was another negro servant at the famous "Fifth Avenue Hotel," then the premier hotel of New York, now a memory, whose business it was to stand at the door of the dining-room and take the hats of the gentlemen as they passed into it at meal-times. Often he must have handled in that way from two to three hundred hats within an hour, but though he never gave number-checks for them, merely taking the hat and placing it on one of the numerous receptacles for that purpose, he would unostentatiously hand back his hat to each guest as he left the room after the meal, without ever being known to make a mistake. A friend of mine would hardly believe such a feat of memory possible, and on having one day personally convinced himself of the fact, could not resist asking the man, "I say, how on earth do you know this is my hat?" "I *don't* know this is your hat, sir," was the quick reply, "I only know it's the hat you gave me."

Speaking of hotels—my curiosity as to why

to every one of them there should be, as was the case, a separate "Ladies' Entrance," generally through a side-door, was not long in being gratified. To try to reach the clerk's counter of a hotel by the ordinary front door meant pushing one's way through a crowd of "gentlemen" in the lobby, half their number, during the hot season, in their shirt sleeves; some standing about in groups, toothpick in mouth, some sitting or rather lying on rocking-chairs, with their feet on the window-sills or radiators, smoking, or chewing tobacco or gum or else the suspicious coffee-bean, with a "spittoon" in safe proximity, the latter however a commodity which, to judge from the unmistakable circumstantial evidence on the floor, appeared, by some of the more Bohemian, that is to say less refined customers, to be considered rather a time-wasting luxury. Never before in my life had I seen so many business men gathered together, all intently engaged in the pursuit of doing nothing. Loafing seemed to have become a fine art; and of the way really busy people had to guard against its being practised in their offices, my friend, John Thallon, Robert's brother, a well-to-do merchant, one day afforded me an opportunity of seeing a rather striking exemplification. I had been invited by him to inspect his business premises in New York,

and being shown through the different departments and rooms, I noticed every now and then a neat little placard suspended in conspicuous places, from hanging-lamps or nails in the wall, bearing, in clear, large type, the mysterious legend "Please don't look at my back!"

"What does this mean?" I asked, handling one of them. "Well, turn it over!" I did, and was highly amused to read on the other side, printed in large type, the words: "*Don't you think it's about time to go?*"

"You see," Thallon said, "really busy people have no time to notice these cards. It is only men who come here without any genuine business purpose, hanging about the place and stealing my time, who, disregarding the warning on the front of the placard, cannot resist looking at the reverse. The result is most gratifying. They generally sneak away after a minute or two, and my office knows them no more." I thought this little device exceedingly clever, a very happy combination of Scottish shrewdness and American humour.

Travelling, too, had its amusing sides. Not infrequently you had to put up with so-called conveniences which, especially to people accustomed to European ways, turned out to be so many nuisances.

I don't know whether the custom is still flourishing, but in the early 'eighties a train had hardly left the platform of the starting-station, called the "Depot," when itinerant hawkers commenced to proceed from one end of the train to the other, calling out their wares: apples, pop-corn, bananas, pea-nuts, molasses-candies, chicken-sandwiches, chewing-gum, and, worst of all, "the latest novels" (generally pronounced "nav'ls"). The latter they would actually place on unwary, defenceless passengers' knees and leave them there until their return journey through the car. I remember Henry James telling me how, exasperated by the vile practice, he once, without a word, making a catapult of his thumb and index-finger, precipitated one of the obnoxious volumes which had been deposited on his knees, on to the floor of the carriage, as you would an offensive insect or an objectionable crumb, whereupon the imperturbable young Autolycus picked it up and, half pityingly, half disdainfully exclaimed, "Well, *you* ain't travelled much!"

And the sleeping-cars! There were from twelve to sixteen so-called "sections" in each of those, as a rule, exceedingly badly ventilated sleeping-carriages, situated on both sides of the narrow middle passage, each section con-

sisting of a lower and upper berth which, when occupied by a would-be sleeper, were curtained off. The tickets for the berths being issued according to priority of application, and there being no separate sections for the two sexes, it was no infrequent occurrence for a lady to be seen climbing into an upper berth with a gentleman snoring in the lower. At one end of the car there was an open wash-room, containing three or four basins; and to see in the early morning the male passengers, one after the other, clad in neither coat nor waistcoat, without collar or tie, in fact alarmingly *en négligé*, flourishing a sponge or a razor or a tooth-brush, making a dash for that wash-room, or to watch the queue of those who, finding the basins already in possession of other "very imperfect ablutioners" (dear W. S. Gilbert—these three words alone would have made thee immortal!), were waiting their turn, was a sight to be remembered. Fortunately these cars were provided with two little private sleeping compartments, one at each end, and possessing each its own toilet commodities. By engaging one of these compartments you could, at a considerable extra fare of course, remain by yourself all through the journey, a privilege of which, not caring to turn Anthropologist,[1]

[1] "Anthropology—Study of man as an animal" (*Oxford Dictionary*).

I was not slow in availing myself ever after.

But to return to Boston. In the spring of 1876, when only just sixteen years old, Lillian Bailey had made her *début* there at a concert given by Boston's leading musician, Benjamin J. Lang, who on that occasion was assisted also by a pianist and composer rapidly rising into prominence—Arthur Foote. These two men, natives both of historical Salem in Massachusetts, the scene of Nathaniel Hawthorne's master romance, *The Scarlet Letter*, had from that time on taken a most kindly interest in the young lady, whose rare talent, earnestness, and charming personality had greatly impressed them; and it was only natural that they should have been the first of her many friends to whom my young wife was anxious to introduce me. Mr. Lang, originally a pianist, having received his training from Liszt, Alfred Jaell, and other masters in Germany, was organist of King's Chapel, conductor of the Cecilia Society and of the Apollo Club, and a much sought after teacher of the organ and the pianoforte. Thorough and enthusiastic musician, broad-minded, tactful, of great general culture and a rare kindness of heart, he was the acknowledged leader of the musical community of Boston.

Arthur Foote, a graduate of Harvard, held the post of organist at the First Unitarian Church, and, though considerably Lang's junior, was already then one of the foremost composers and teachers in the States, of the growth of whose fame beyond the boundaries of his native continent the performance of a Trio of his at one of the Monday Popular Concerts in London by Sir Charles and Lady Hallé and Signor Piatti in 1887, gave most gratifying evidence, whilst one of his many songs, the charming and sympathetic setting of Sir Gilbert Parker's "Irish Folk Song," has gained a world-wide popularity. These two men exercised a decided and most beneficent influence on the musical life of Boston and the development of its taste. And their friendship and generous support from the very first, which former in the case of the younger man has, I am happy to say, survived to this day—dear genial Mr. Lang, alas, being no more among us — will ever be a source of deepest gratitude to me. Indeed, I doubt if without them I should have come out of the first season of the Boston Symphony Orchestra alive. That the sudden assumption of so much power in the affairs of music in Boston by so young a man as I then was—I had just turned thirty-one—and a stranger into the bargain, would be hailed with

enthusiasm or meet with universal approval, neither Mr. Higginson nor I for a moment expected. And particularly as regards the attitude of the press, it most decidedly was *not*.

XX

The simple and straightforward announcement made by Mr. Higginson in the Boston papers at the end of March 1881, headed "In the Interest of Good Music," plainly stating the accomplished fact of the establishment of the new orchestra and giving my name as that of its first conductor, came as a great surprise to the general public, not wholly agreeable, I fear, to some musicians, and evidently a positive shock to most critics, one of whom promptly delivered himself of the following declaration: "Some protest is certainly needed to stem this tide of adulation that rises and breaks at the feet of Mr. Henschel. We have had conductors in Boston, and good ones. It is a mistaken idea of Mr. Henschel's friends—if not of his own—that we have waited here, all unconscious of our own poverty and great needs, for this musical trinity combined in the person of Mr. Henschel—oratorio exponent, composer and orchestral conductor.

We are not, and have not been, half as ignorant as they suppose."

Others followed suit in similar terms, though apparently with little effect on public opinion, for when, early in September, the sale of tickets for the first season commenced, both Mr. Higginson and I were greatly astonished and gratified at the demand for them. As early as six o'clock on the morning of the sale people commenced getting into line before the doors of the old Music Hall, one paper even asserting this to have taken place in the afternoon of the previous day. The *Transcript*, Boston's premier evening paper, asked in bewilderment: "Where does all the audience come from? Where have all these symphony-goers been during the last ten years that they have hidden themselves so completely from public view?" This was encouraging. I was by that time rehearsing industriously and enthusiastically with the orchestra, with all the members of which I stood on the most friendly footing, and to whom, previous to the commencement of rehearsal, I had issued this letter:

To the Members of the Boston Symphony Orchestra

Gentlemen—I beg leave to say a few words to you now, in order to avoid waste of time after our work has once begun. Wherever a body of men are

working together for one and the same end, as you and I, the utmost of unity and mutual understanding is required in order to achieve anything that is great or good.

Every one of us, engaged for the concerts we are on the point of beginning, has been engaged because his powers, his talents have been considered valuable for the purpose. Every one of us, therefore, should have a like interest as well as a like share in the success of our work, and it is in this regard that I address you now, calling your attention to the following points with which I urgently beg of you to acquaint yourselves thoroughly :

Let us be punctual. Better ten minutes before than one behind the time appointed.

Tuning will cease the moment the conductor gives the sign for doing so.

No member of the orchestra, even if his presence be not needed for the moment, will leave the hall during the time of the rehearsals and concerts without the consent of the conductor.

The folios containing the parts will be closed after each rehearsal and concert.

Inasmuch as we are engaged for musical purposes, we will not talk of private matters during rehearsals and concerts.

Hoping that, thus working together with perfect understanding, our labours will be crowned with success.—I am, gentlemen, your obedient servant,

G. H.

Being absolutely my own master as regards the orchestra and its work, I tried several experiments in the way of the placing of the

orchestra, dividing, for instance, the strings into equal halves on my right and left with the object of enabling the listeners on either side of the hall to have the full effect of the whole string-quintet. Those experiments I submitted in letters, illustrated by diagrams, to Brahms, who most kindly, in his answers, commented upon their practicability or otherwise. "But," he writes on one occasion, "by far the best feature in all your arrangements of the orchestra, is the fact that no committee will be sitting in front of it. There is not a Kapellmeister on the whole of our continent who would not envy you that!" In the making of the programmes I endeavoured to be guided by the principles laid down by the famous German writer, Gustav Freytag, whose book, *The Technique of the Drama*, I had studied in my Leipsic days, principles which he had evolved from the study of the great dramatists from Sophocles to Shakespeare. In that book Freytag maintains that a drama should have an uneven number of acts, either three or five. The interest should steadily ascend during the first two—or, in the case of a five-act play, during the first three—acts. Here should be the climax, after which, in the last act—or, in the case of a five-act play, in the last two—the interest should gently descend

until, at the end, it has reached the level of the outset.

Accordingly, with hardly an exception, I arranged my programmes so that, commencing with an overture, after which there came a solo, either instrumental or vocal, the climax, viz. the symphony, stood at the end of the first part which generally took up, as regards the length of the concert, two-thirds of the whole. The second part then was a gentle "letting-down" from the more or less acute mental effort claimed by the first part. The scheme seemed to meet with the approval even of the critics. Anyhow, at all the concerts, which took place every Saturday evening for twenty-four successive weeks, the hall was crowded, and as to the public rehearsals on the Friday afternoons, for which—no tickets being sold beforehand—one paid twenty-five cents (one shilling) at the door to every part of the house, there was many an afternoon when people had to be turned away. I shall never forget the public rehearsal for the last concert of the first season, when Beethoven's Ninth Symphony—the preceding eight had all been given in the course of the series—was on the programme. I had left my house in Otis Place for old Music Hall—the magnificent "Symphony" Hall of the present day did not

exist then—and was crossing the Common, when in the distance I observed, fully three or four minutes' walk to the Hall yet, a huge gathering of people. "What a pity," I said to myself, thinking some accident had happened, "this should occur just to-day, when it will interfere with the progress of people wanting to go to the rehearsal!" Imagine my surprise and, needless to add, my gratification when, on coming nearer, I found that the crowd was slowly moving towards Music Hall—they were the very people trying to get admission to the rehearsal! I had to beg and elbow my way to the hall, and even there—men and women sitting on the steps leading to the platform—encountered some difficulty in my endeavour to reach the conductor's place in time. As far, therefore, as regards the public, there was nothing to complain of. *But*—the critics! It was after the unquestionable success of the very first concert that the seemingly organized newspaper attacks commenced. Nothing was good. My tempi, my "untraditional" way of conducting, even the seating of the orchestra furnished abundant reasons for adverse criticism, the growth of which in violence appeared to keep pace with that of the favour the concerts found with the public from week to week. I was, by one critic, considered "a veritable

Brahmin " in my passion for Brahms. " There are more dissonances in Music Hall in a week now," he wrote, " than there used to be in a year." Ridicule, sarcasm, venom, wit—not always free from vulgarity—were called upon to serve the purpose of defeating Mr. Higginson's scheme. At one of the concerts I was announced to play a MS. Pianoforte Concerto of my own—which soon afterwards, in spite of its momentary success, shared the fate of that significant Concert-Overture—and this afforded the critics a welcome opportunity for the activity of all the above requisites of warfare, a warfare which, however, was of a decidedly one-sided kind, as neither Mr. Higginson nor I ever took the slightest public notice of these attacks. Here is a little sample :

> Mr. Henschel will appear as pianist, composer, and conductor, and he has already appeared as a singer in the series. That is a good deal for one man to do. But he will do it with all satisfaction to the public, which seems to be entirely captivated by him. The only thing he cannot do is to appear as a string quartette, or sing duets with himself.

In another paper there appeared a parody on the programme : " Eggshel Concert ; Conductor, Henor Eggshel." Conductor, composer, manager, performers, all had the name of Eggshel, and the items of the programme were

"Zum Andenken," "Vergiss-mein-nicht," "And don't you forget it," "Souviens-toi," "Then you'll remember me," and so on—really very amusing. Certainly the amount of free advertising I got was amazing. That some people minded this sort of thing more than I did, was shown by a letter which appeared in the *Boston Herald*, headed "Mr. Henschel's Critics criticized," and signed "Pro bono publico." It began thus :

"Let me ask, is it fair, just, honourable, or even decent for the managers of these papers "—quoting the *Saturday Evening Gazette*, the *Advertiser*, and the *Transcript*—"to permit such critics to vilify, malign, abuse and ridicule a gentleman of Mr. Henschel's abilities, a born musician, a simple, earnest, devoted worker for the highest and best in music at all times ?" and ended : "If the gentlemen of the press desire to organize a clamour against Mr. Henschel, they will find his friends quite ready to meet them. The fact has been established that Mr. Henschel is a success as a conductor. He has had serious difficulties to overcome on account of the indifferent and demoralized condition of his men. He has not been able yet to prevent some of the old fiddlers from doubling their backs like cobblers and drawing their bows as they would so many wax-ends ; but he has, nevertheless, added new blood, and imparted much of his own enthusiasm, ardour, and life into the mechanical old stagers, so that the result has been an agreeable surprise to all of us, and which has never been seen under the baton of any other conductor. As a whole,

the orchestra is certainly equal to any we had ever had in Boston, and, if it is not already, by the end of the season I doubt not it will be the best one of its class in America."

This was very pleasant reading for a change, although it had very little effect on the critics. The public, however, continued to flock to the concerts in ever-increasing numbers, and the members of the orchestra showed their good-will to me by the gift of a silver salad set, which was presented to me at one of the concerts in February '82, happening to fall on my birthday, in full sight of and with the evident warm approval of the audience.

Just at that time, it being near the end of the first season, Mr. Higginson and I had several meetings in regard to the arrangements for the next one, the result of which was a circular letter to the members of the orchestra, of which I quote the following paragraphs, heralding, as they did, a phase in the organization of orchestras entirely new in the history of musical Boston :

> Your services will be required on each week between October 1 and April 1, on the following days : Wednesday morning, afternoon and evening ; Thursday morning, afternoon and evening ; Friday morning and afternoon ; Saturday morning and evening.
>
> On Wednesday and Thursday all of your time

> will, of course, not be required, but you must be ready when needed. You will be expected to play during these four days either at concerts or at rehearsals, as required. If it is necessary to give a concert occasionally on Friday, you will be asked to give that evening in place of another.
>
> On the days specified you will neither play in any other orchestra nor under any other conductor than Mr. Henschel, except if wanted in your leisure hours by the Handel and Haydn Society, nor will you play for dancing. . . .

Then followed the offers of salary to the individual players. This letter drew forth a perfect eruption of indignation on the part of the critics. "It is a good thing for Mr. Henschel," one of them wrote, "that he received his silver salad set from his orchestra two weeks ago. Just at present there is no desire to give Mr. Henschel anything except censure. The cause of this sudden revulsion of feeling" (!!)—the exclamation marks are mine—"is that Mr. Henschel's efforts at musical reform appear to have suddenly become a little too sweeping, and seem to include the centralization of Boston's music in the hands of this conductor. . . . Mr. Higginson's circular is a direct stab at the older organizations and rival conductors of Boston . . . the manner

in which the proposal is made is one which forebodes tyranny. Some of the oldest members of the orchestra, men whose services to music in Boston have entitled them to deference and respect, are omitted altogether, and will be left out of the new organization. . . ."

Another paper accused Mr. Higginson of "making a corner" in orchestral players, characterizing his gift as an "imposition": "something that we *must* receive or else look musical starvation in the face. It is as if a man should make a poor friend a present of several baskets of champagne and, at the same time, cut off his whole water-supply. . . ." The *Gazette* even went so far as to describe Mr. Higginson's "monopoly of music"—"an idea that could scarcely have emanated from any association except that of deluded wealth with arrant charlatanism"!

All this deluge of abuse affected Mr. Higginson and me as water does the proverbial back of a duck. The newspapers were eagerly searched for replies from either him or me, people anticipating with glee the great fun of a "regular fight"; and when at last, on March 21, there really appeared a letter from Mr. Higginson in the papers, I would have given much to have seen the faces of some of the people who read the following announce-

ment, most characteristic in its shortness and simplicity, and, as a rejoinder to the enemy's onslaughts, really amusing :

When last spring the general scheme for the concerts of the Boston Symphony Orchestra was put forth, the grave doubt in my mind was whether they were wanted. This doubt has been dispelled by a most kindly and courteous public, and therefore the scheme will stand. The concerts and public rehearsals, with Mr. George Henschel as conductor, will go on under the same conditions in the main as to time, place, programmes and prices. Any changes will be duly made public when the tickets are advertised for sale.

HENRY LEE HIGGINSON.

And when the tickets *were* advertised and the sale had commenced, this is what the newspaper had to say about it on Monday morning :

The interest taken in the coming series of Symphony Concerts under the direction of Mr. Henschel is shown by the demand for season tickets. A few people appeared at the Box Office at Music Hall on Saturday morning for the purpose of securing positions in the line of purchasers. As Music Hall was to be used they were not allowed to stand in the passageway and, accordingly, stood in line on Winter Street. Some time in the afternoon others came and formed a line in Music Hall Place. When this was noticed those around the corner made a rush, and some who had secured good positions in the first place were not so fortunate at the time of the change. Early Sunday

evening the line rapidly lengthened, and at seven o'clock there were more than a hundred persons in line, and at nine o'clock the number had increased to at least two hundred. Chairs, camp-stools, and even a long wooden settee were in the service of these patient ones, and the floor of the doorway leading to the vestibule was covered by about a dozen individuals lying packed as close as sardines. The time was passed in smoking, chatting, and by occasionally taking a promenade, a neighbour securing the seat of the absent one until he returned. When the sale of tickets began, there were about three hundred and fifty persons in line, many of them boys who were holding positions for others. Some who intended purchasing only two tickets would take orders for four more, six tickets to each person being the limit. It is said that the second man in the line sold his position for thirty-five dollars. . . .

This certainly was encouraging, and if it did not entirely change the attitude of the press, it had at least some influence on their tactics. They now contended the concerts did not fulfil their intended mission of ministering to the large mass of the public. One man, referring to the first season, wrote :

I saw but few whom I should believe to be poor or even of moderate means. . . . "Full dress" was to be seen on every hand. . . . I should be very glad to take my family to hear these educating and refining concerts, but I have not the means to go in full dress. . . . Is not Mr. Higginson's scheme a failure, practically? . . .

Another :

> Symphony Concerts may be given for a number of years in Boston at a rate which will certainly involve pecuniary loss ; but it is not at all probable that Mr. Higginson will have his successor in any such unappreciated system of philanthropy. . . . How long the rôle of King Ludwig is to be played in Boston, it is impossible to determine. Certain it is that no one is profiting by it save the distinguished conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

Well, as I said before, neither Mr. Higginson nor I heeded these things, and the second season commenced "as advertised." I was greatly amused on reading in the *Transcript* on the day after the first concert : "Either Mr. Henschel has converted the critics, or the critics have converted Mr. Henschel. Which is it ?" And actually, after this, there seemed to prevail a more conciliatory tone in the utterings of the critics, with now and then a flickering of the old spirit, as will presently be seen. The programme of the concert for Saturday, February 17, 1883, had in the usual way been announced on the last page of the preceding one, but whilst rehearsing the same on the morning of Tuesday the 13th, the news of Wagner's death at the Palazzo Vendramini in Venice was brought into the hall, whereupon I immediately decided to abandon the adver-

tised programme and substitute for it one entirely consisting of works from the pen of the dead master. This was the programme :

Prelude (*Tristan and Isolde*); Lohengrin's Legend and Farewell, sung by Mr. Charles R. Adams; *Siegfried Idyll*; Elizabeth's Greeting to the Hall of Song, from *Tannhäuser*, sung by Mlle. Gabriella Boëma; Prelude to the *Mastersingers of Nuremberg*; Pogner's Address from the same opera, sung by myself and conducted by Mr. Listemann, the leader; Prelude to *Parsifal*, and the Death March from the *Götterdämmerung*.

The *Parsifal* prelude I had introduced to Boston earlier in the season, playing it both at the beginning and at the end of the same concert, a proceeding which, much to my gratification, had found considerable favour with the musicians as well as the public.

This Wagner-Memorial Concert was thus criticized by the *Gazette* :

A tribute of respect to the dead composer crowded the front of the first gallery, and consisted of some mourning drapery decorated with laurel, and a portrait of Wagner. The Orchestra wore black instead of the customary white neckties. The programme was gloomy enough in all conscience, and the necessity for its performance gave one more cause for regret at the composer's death. The whole concert was an elegiac nightmare. We doubt if ever Music Hall echoed to a longer stretch of cacophonous dreariness within the same length of time.

Incredible !

A year later, on the anniversary of Wagner's death, the programme contained, in memory of the event, three of his compositions. This time one of the critics, and a very clever one, Mr. Louis C. Elson, who has, among other meritorious work, done some excellent English versions of a great number of German songs, blossomed into poetry :

> Oh, Henschel, cease thy higher flight,
> And give the public something light !
> Let no more Wagner themes thy bill enhance,
> And give the native workers just one chance.
> Don't give the Dvořák symphony again ;
> If you would give us joy, oh, give us Paine !

The last line is really quite witty, for Mr. John K. Paine, Professor of Music at Harvard University, and a composer of considerable skill and erudition, had written a " Spring Symphony " which was " not half bad," and which I brought to a hearing during the series.

From the reference to Dvořák it will be seen that the task I had set myself, of introducing the works of living composers new to Boston, was not a very grateful one. It does seem almost as incredible now as the " cacophonous dreariness of Wagner " to have, for instance, the Adagio from Brahms' Serenade in D likened by one of the critics, as it was, to " the sapient musings of some brilliant idiot " ! " We are

told," that gentleman continued, "by an eminent musician of the orchestra, that thirty years will make a wondrous change in our views concerning Brahms' idiosyncrasies. Let us not run so unwelcome a risk. Let us die in peace, with none of the abortive transition to plague our life away, that might be expected by some of the so-called future school of music. . . ."

Poor man! The thirty years have passed, and wondrous indeed the change they have wrought. Debussy, D'Indy, Ravel, Scriabine, Richard Strauss, Reger, Schönberg—what has my friend, if he be still among the living, to say of these?

"Tempora mutantur, nos et mutamur in illis." But, thank God, not all of us. Some there are left to whom the names BACH, BEETHOVEN still stand for all that is highest, noblest, purest, holiest, most lovable in our art.

XXI

During the second year of my conducting the Boston Symphony Orchestra my heart was occasionally made heavy by letters from Europe, expressing disappointment at my remaining over there so long. Mme. Clara Schumann wrote: "Do you want to forsake Europe altogether? You can imagine how the news of your having accepted for a second year astonishes me, and how much I, and doubtless many with me, deplore it. What will Brahms say to it? . . . " And Brahms, from Ischl, in June 1882, writes: "That you have undertaken to conduct another series of twenty-five concerts in Boston is a very nice thing in itself, only not exactly to us a cause for rejoicing. . . ."

Early in '83 I received another letter from him in which he refers to my Boston position, and which, I think, is characteristic enough to be given in full:

Vienna, 1883.

Dear Henschel—With mortification I thank you at last for so many kind and good news. You really

have deserved that one should settle down comfortably to write a comfortable reply—but I beg you once for all to remember that with me the moment is still to come when I shall write the first letter *with pleasure.*

Moreover, it is most aggravating to write to one who has left us so completely and whom we could make such excellent good use of here !

I dare say it's useless to ask you if you would at all entertain the idea of taking the position at Breslau which Scholz [1] resigns this winter ?

For your friendly pressure regarding a manuscript work for performance I must thank you. But it would be the first time I had allowed a MS. to go out of my hands. A new piece of mine I like to hear several times (in MS.). If then it appears to me—so accidentally—worthy of being printed, it cannot, for any length of time, escape that operation. Otherwise I do not give it into other hands.[2]

But we can and shall make provision that you have such novelties over there sooner than other people. Could you make use of a choral work ? In that case Simrock just now would have a rather pretty little one which you might secure ! [3]

Now, please give my greetings to yours and—ours ; I mean our colleagues. Greet them from my heart and let me have the pleasure of being allowed to keep in contact with them, though it be only by means of programmes and newspapers.

[1] Bernhard Scholz, composer, Director of the Hoch'sche Conservatory of Music at Frankfort-on-the-Main, then conductor of the Symphony Concerts at Breslau.

[2] I was, however, later on successful in procuring from Brahms the MS. of his Concerto for Violin and Violoncello (Op. 102) for first performance in England.

[3] That " pretty little one " was no less important and serious a work than the *Gesang der Parzen* (Song of the Fates), Op. 89.

I quite see that I am not worthy of frequent news by letter! But you don't know my grateful disposition!

Again and beforehand many thanks. Heartily yours, J. B.

Still, I had grown so fond of my orchestra, to work with whom under such uniquely advantageous and gratifying conditions was a source of constant delight to me, that I accepted Mr. Higginson's offer of a continuation of my services for a third term, during which the scheme of giving concerts in places outside of Boston was inaugurated,—confined however, for the time, to towns in New England. But when at the end of the third season Mr. Higginson, now assured of the stability of the institution, submitted to me a contract the acceptance of which would practically have meant settling in the States for good, I felt that the ties which bound me to the old country were too strong for me, prosperous and happy and profitable in every sense as these three years had been, and I decided to return to Europe.

As I write this I see before my mind's eye the crowded Boston Music Hall on the evening of the last concert of the season '83–84. The first number on the programme was Schumann's overture to *Manfred*, which opens with

an impetuous "forte" phrase, syncopated, quick, and requiring a very decided, strong down-beat. I had raised my baton to attention and—except the garland of flowers which friendly hands had wound around my desk nothing seemed to indicate an unusual state of things—was just on the point of letting it come down with a will, when—shall I ever forget the peculiar sensation it gave me—I saw, as in a dream, the leader and, with him, the whole orchestra rise to their feet, and before I could realise what was happening, the familiar, affecting strain of "Auld Lang Syne" filled the vast hall, played by those dear fellows of the orchestra and sung by the audience, which I noticed, in turning round bewildered and embarrassed, had risen too. I was touched to a degree, far too much so for thinking of speaking. At a subsequent semi-public farewell gathering of friends I found on my seat at the table the following apostrophe, in a neat hand, and on a nice, old-fashioned sheet of paper with embossed edges :

Henschel! Henschel!
Women and men shall
Sit at thy feet and list to thy song.
Henschel! Henschel!
Ah, where and when shall
Such rapture once more to us belong?

Henschel! Henschel!
Never again shall
Leader or Singer be half so dear.
Henschel! Henschel!
Sing thou and then shall
Earth be forgotten and Heaven draw near!

If whoever wrote this be still among the living and happening to read this book, I should be very grateful for a revelation of his or her identity. Surely it was not easy for me to tear myself away from so much kindness and affection!

Before leaving this for me so memorable and important chapter in the history of my career I am sure I shall be pardoned if I quote just one more extract from the papers of the time, as, in the light of subsequent developments, it seems amusing enough to be almost pathetic.

The fact of my decision to return to Europe after the end of the third season had become known and the name of Wilhelm Gericke of Vienna been announced as that of my successor. It was also a matter of common knowledge that, during that last season, the attendance of the public at the public rehearsals had become larger than ever before, whilst that at the evening concerts had shown a slight decrease; a circumstance easily accounted for not only by the considerably greater cheapness of admission to the rehearsals, but also by the fact

that those public rehearsals were identically "as good" as the concerts, even as regards the appearance of the soloists. I cannot recall a single instance of an interruption at these rehearsals, or a repetition within a number of the programme for the sake of correction. But there it was: Decrease of Attendance at the Boston Symphony Concerts! What did it matter if the total weekly average of attendance — close on 4500 — at both concerts and rehearsals, showed a steady improvement on the two previous seasons? Here was an alarming and significant symptom, which no self-respecting critic could afford losing the opportunity of making a handle of for a weapon to strike one last weighty blow. And this was it. (I will be charitable and refrain from revealing the name of the prophetic paper):

I believe that a large number attended the Symphony Concerts for the first two seasons simply because they were fashionable. Now the force of the fashionable commandment—Thou shalt not miss a symphony concert—has spent itself, and the audiences are smaller than in the opening seasons of the enterprise, although the orchestra plays better and the programmes are more interesting. Poor Mr. Gericke! He comes from Vienna just in time to take charge of an enterprise in which public interest is waning, and lucky Mr. Henschel, he will leave it in a manner which will enable him to say that it only prospered when under *his* direction. But I will not croak out

"Ichabod, the glory is departed," before I am quite sure that it has really and entirely left. That it has partially gone is undoubted.

That was written in 1884.

During the more than thirty years that have passed since then, the Boston Symphony Orchestra has uninterruptedly continued its splendidly beneficent work in the cause of music, and not only in Boston, but throughout the length and breadth of the United States, work which has been described in greater detail in a just-published *History of the Boston Symphony Orchestra*, admirably written by M. A. de Wolfe Howe. It reads like some chapter in the Old Testament:

After Henschel came Gericke; after Gericke came Nikisch; after Nikisch came Paur; after Paur came Gericke; after Gericke Karl Muck; after Muck Fiedler, and after Fiedler again Muck. And this last named had the happiness and gratification of conducting a concert on the eightieth birthday of that grand old man, the founder and supporter of one of the very finest orchestras in the world who, on entering the hall, was greeted by orchestra and audience with an outburst of enthusiasm equalled only by that with which the toast of his health was pledged by the many friends and admirers as they sat down

to the Jubilee dinner in Mr. Higginson's honour, and listened to what the modest man had to say in answer to it, words which are worthy to be recorded as a lasting inspiration :

Several times when I have faltered in my plans for the future,[1] I have taken heart again on seeing the crowd of young, fresh schoolgirls, of music students, of tired school teachers, of weary men, of little old ladies leading grey lives not often reached by the sunshine, and I have said to myself : " One year more, anyway." To us all come hard blows from the hand of fate, with hours, days, weeks of suffering and of sadness. Even boys and girls know this early and know it late. At these times music draws the pain, or at least relieves it, just as the sun does. Considering these things, can I have done harm by the concerts ? Are they not worth while, even if they cost me years of work and worry ? What were we made for ? We are all bound in our day and generation to serve our country and our fellow-men in some way. Lucky is he who finds a fair field for his work, and when he has put his hands to the plough, he may not lightly turn back. He may not too easily say, " Enough, I am weary."

Surely admiration, affection, and gratitude will follow the name of Henry Lee Higginson for generations to come.

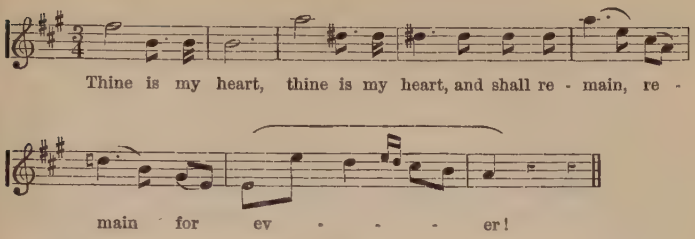
[1] In regard to the Symphony Concerts.

XXII

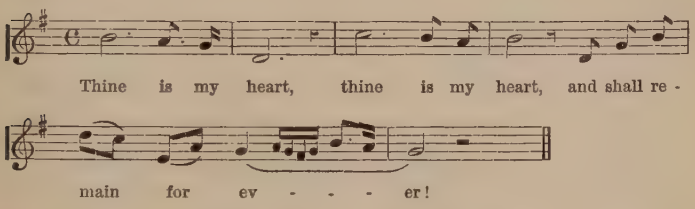
The holidays between the concert seasons were generally spent among the hills of Massachusetts. I had read and heard a good deal about the particular attractiveness, and now had plenty of opportunity to verify all that had been said and written in praise of country and life in New England, by which name the six north-eastern states of Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine are known collectively. Looking back on the period into which those first visits fell, I find it difficult to realise—so truly old new-worldy it all appeared to me—that it is only thirty-seven years since I passed my first summer there. One seemed to breathe the very spirit of the Pilgrim Fathers in the simple, vigorous life of the people in those villages around Northampton, of which Haydenville was one of the prettiest. Founded by, and named after my wife's maternal ancestors, a family of mechanics who, two generations back, had built a brass foundry on the banks

of the river there, it was a peaceful, quietly flourishing place when I came to know it. The main street of the village was a broad avenue of those magnificent elm-trees for which the country all about is famous. Set back a few yards from the side-walk, which not infrequently consisted of wooden planks, and connected with it by plots of grass containing well-cared-for flower-beds or else fine specimens of trees—walnuts, chestnuts, or planes—stood the dwelling-houses, all in their own grounds. The two most distinguished among them were, not unnaturally, the homes of Josiah Hayden, my wife's grandfather, and Joel, his brother. Quite imposing buildings they were, with broad steps up to a portico, the triangular roof of which was supported by four Ionic columns. That these were of wood, painted white, and not of marble, did not take away a bit from their stateliness; neither did the houses seem in the least out of place in the simple New England village. You instinctively felt that the Greek portico merely testified to a love, in the owners, of the beautiful, independent of surroundings. There was dignity without pretence to grandeur outside, and within, true comfort in the shapes of cosy armchairs, sofas, large fireplaces, wide four-posters, books, pictures in plenty. How I remember those

patriarchal Sunday afternoons when all the available members of the families would assemble on the verandah—called "piazza,"—and, distributed in groups between the Greek columns, the old people in easy-chairs, mostly, I fear, of the rocking species, the younger ones on the steps, keep up tradition by singing hymns and psalms as in the days of Josiah and Joel, who had already joined the Choir Invisible. Josiah—other biblical names in the family were Joseph, James, Samuel, David, Sarah, Ruth, Esther—had been a Methodist minister, said to have had a beautiful voice, and the hymns we sang were chiefly of that church, like "Jerusalem the Golden," "Every hour I need Thee," "Why not come to Me now. . . ." Commonplace as some of them unquestionably are from the musical standpoint, it is remarkable how their naïve sincerity invests them with a quality almost amounting to beauty. The devotional, artless singing of them, too, in the open air, for every passer-by to hear, and in the simplest possible harmonies, was most impressive. Add to that the strange force of mental association, and there is perhaps no wonder these hymns seem lovely to me to this day. Who does not know that fine Love-song from Schubert's *Müllerlieder*, with the impassioned and beautiful refrain :



and yet the very inferior setting, by Kurschmann, a long-forgotten composer, of the same poem :



seems to me even to-day lovelier and preferable, because it rings in my ears as my mother used to sing it to me in the days of my childhood.

Not far from the two Hayden houses, farther up the street, were the church, a simple wooden structure with a graceful spire, and the schoolhouse ; on the other side of the river various houses, all built of wood, with the usual comfortable and sociable "piazza" round the ground-floor and a "yard," as the little plots of grass or garden rather irreverently were called ; also a few shops for the necessities and conveniences of daily life and the "drug-store," containing the post office whither one had to go or send for

one's mail, and where, on Saturday afternoons, the boys were treating the girls to a sip of the American nectar, an ice-cream soda. Farther off, strewn about over the slopes of the hills and nearer the railway line, stood a number of small "frame" cottages for the poorer class of the inhabitants, mostly mill-hands; for besides the "Brass-shop" there was also quite a good-sized cotton-mill in the place. The little railroad branch from Northampton extended to the town of Williamsburg, one station beyond Haydenville, and on hearing, some distance off, the cheery sound of the clear and powerful bell which was attached to the engine and rung by the driver for some minutes when nearing our village, to walk to the station and witness the arrival of the diminutive train, consisting of locomotive, passenger-coach, and van, as it leisurely drew up at the platform, used to be one of the excitements of the day. Things have changed since then, when it took over thirty hours to go from New York to Chicago instead of the present eighteen; and the answer of the negro porter at a Western station who, on being asked if the Louisville Express stopped there, disdainfully replied: "Thtop? Doethn't even heth'tate!" is doubtless of recent date.

The drives through the country about

Haydenville were very varied and attractive, and the owner of the hotel—needless to say the only one in the place—did a good business during the summer months, letting his buggies and horses to those that could afford this more luxurious way of enjoying the really beautiful scenery, or else of doing their shopping in Northampton, a prosperous town charmingly situated among the hills and famous for one of the best young ladies' schools in the States, Smith College.

There is a singular attractiveness in the American "buggy," especially—for young people—the one-seated species, which just accommodates two, one of whom must be the driver. It is a very light vehicle, with four large thin wheels of equal size, made of the sinewy, steely hickory wood, which plough through the heavy, sandy roads like the cutters of a sleigh through the snow. Sharp turns in narrow roads are, on account of the height of the wheels and the absence of a lock, only negotiable by backing the machine—often more than once—just as one has to do with motors nowadays; so, with a good horse in the shafts—and mine host of the Haydenville House had some excellent pacers which he only let out to particularly favourite customers—a spin through the country was not only a most exhilarating

experience but also something of a sport. Pacing was at that time much *en vogue* in the States, some towns even boasting of roads, called "Speedways," specially made for the purpose, and there were any number of horses known to be capable of doing a mile in two and a half or three minutes. One tells of a man who, very proud of the swiftness of his mare, capped a rather extravagant story of some other horse's speed, by saying, "Well, that's nothing. I took a friend for a run behind my mare the other day, and after a while he asked me, "What churchyard is this we are driving through?" "Churchyard?" I said, "why, man, these are milestones!"

I remember driving to Northampton one morning alone in such a buggy—this apropos of shopping—and, much to the amusement of the family, coming home with eleven huge water-melons. I had hitched my mare to one of the wooden posts outside a greengrocer's, unaware of the dangerously close proximity of a large pyramid of gigantic water-melons piled up on the side-walk. Returning to my conveyance after having made my purchases and some calls in different parts of the place, I found that the clever animal, evidently bored at standing idle for so long, had been having a beautiful time during my absence, innocently

sampling eleven of the popular vegetable by nibbling off a little round piece of the thick rind. Of course I had to buy the lot, which I distributed among the population. There was quite a good doctor in Haydenville.

Another amusing experience of a very different kind we had in Boston at the end of the summer of 1887. The Hub of the Universe had always been the acknowledged centre of spiritualistic activity in the States, a fact to which W. D. Howell's delightful romance, *The Undiscovered Country*, bears witness. At that time the southern part of the town was particularly noted for houses in which the cult of spiritualism was practised, and it was to one of those that William James, Henry's brother, proposed to take us.

William James, charming and fascinating to almost the same degree as his more famous brother, had made research into psychic phenomena and investigation of the truth in matters spiritualistic a life-study, and his very earnestness on the subject rendered him all the more eager to expose sham and fraud wherever he was likely to find it. It was therefore with no small excitement and anticipation—none of our party, excepting our amiable guide had ever been present at a real *séance*—that we set out with him one fine

evening on our expedition to the undiscovered country. After alighting from the rather dingy "horse-car," where we had found ourselves in very mixed company (the most conspicuous member of which was an unusually large, evidently well-to-do negress of the blackest dye, in a dainty muslin dress with white and light-green stripes, a large straw hat with a huge purple feather, a red sunshade, and big diamonds stuck in the lobes of her ears and glittering on two of her dusky fingers), we wended our way through narrow, dirty, dimly-lighted streets, before most of the houses in which there stood wooden barrels or zinc bins holding the refuse ready for the scavenger's rounds next morning, until at last we reached the haunted house in Rutland Street, one of a long row of poor, shabby-genteel residences, the front doors of which are reached by a short flight of steps with the wooden banisters painted over with a stone-coloured substance to make them look like hewn granite. On our pulling the bell the door was opened by a solemn-looking, elderly, nondescript gentleman in a black frock-coat suit, something between minister of the gospel and shop-walker. The look of distrust with which he viewed our party was, I have hardly a doubt, due to the presence with us of Nettie, a daughter of

Huxley's, the possessor of a fine contralto voice, who had accompanied us on our visit to the States, in order to continue her only lately commenced singing studies with me. She was uncommonly tall and muscular, and full of that boyish mischief twinkling in her large eyes—a paternal inheritance—which seemed to be up to all sorts of fun. I should not wonder if our spiritualistic host had suspected her of being a young Harvard student, masquerading—they were known to do that sometimes for a wager—as a woman. At last the man, still somewhat hesitating, asked us to follow him, and conducting us to the end of a dark, narrow passage leading to the back-parlour, bade us enter the sanctum, a large, stuffy, musty-smelling room, the walls of which were hung with a dirty, dark-green, flower-patterned, glazed paper. From the ceiling was suspended a gasolier without globes, on each of the three arms of which was burning a very diminutive bluish flame, just sufficient to allow us to distinguish a few silent people of both sexes seated on small wicker-bottomed chairs and, at the end of the room, stretching from one side of it across to the other and hiding a sort of stage, slightly raised, a thick black curtain. On the level of the floor, close to the wall, a poor, emaciated, humpbacked girl of about sixteen, dressed in

black, was seated before a little portable American organ, endeavouring to squeeze something resembling a hymn-tune out of the wheezy instrument which, besides labouring under a great difficulty of respiration, had the hiccups in a most distressing manner. Its sufferings being over for the moment, the man in black addressed the audience—or should I say the congregation—dwelling on the delicate and sensitive nature of the spirits who, instinctively divining the presence of scoffers, of which he hoped there were none among us, were not unfrequently apt to refuse to appear altogether. Then he most naïvely took out of his pocket a gas-key and, having extinguished two of the flames, turned down the remaining one so low as to make the room practically pitch-dark; and out of that darkness, amidst expectant silence, his voice was heard to ask the solemn question, "Are you there?" No response. Then, to encourage the humble spirits, some more hiccups and more silence, after which there came at last a feeble knock from behind the curtain, and then another, and, in quick succession, some stronger ones, and then—will you believe it?—several spirits in white phosphorescent robes rose suddenly from behind chairs, noiselessly flitting across the floor as if in the happy possession of mortal

feet, and disappearing in the direction of the curtain. If only the key had not been in the man's pocket, what fun it would have been to turn on the light during these apparitions! As it was, suppressed exclamations of awe on the part of devout believers could be heard in some portions of the room, whilst there was a distinct sound of something like, I am afraid, suppressed giggling coming from where we sat. That settled it. Some of the spirits must have communicated the outrage to their still immaterialized brethren, for in spite of the redoubled efforts of the girl at the harmonium to appease the wrath of the offended spirits, there was no sign of a willingness on their part to honour us again. We began to get a little uneasy and to wonder how it would end, when the lugubrious voice of the gentleman in charge of the proceedings promptly terminated our suspense. In doleful notes of deepest emotion and regret he told us that owing to the presence in the room of frivolous—yes, he used that harsh word—frivolous scoffers, the spirits absolutely refused to work. And then out came the gas-key; the lights were turned on, and we—morally speaking—out. Once in the street our own private spirits, relieved of the fetters of good breeding, rose to heights of hilarity not generally attained by people who have seen a ghost.

XXIII

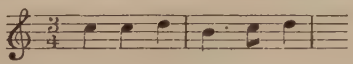
In the spring of 1884 I had removed my "Lares et Penates" to London, from where, however, I soon took my wife and little daughter on a visit to my family and to see old friends in Germany. *A propos* of this visit I cannot refrain from mentioning a little bird story which I should hardly have credited had it been told to, instead of actually experienced by, me. My sister Hedwig, widow of the painter Theodor Grosse, late member of the Royal Academy of Dresden, and famous for his frescoes in the loggia of the Leipsic Museum, was very fond of a bullfinch which she had had for many years, and which piped to perfection the tune "God save the King." It had always been a delight to me, when on a visit to my sister, to hear the clear flute-like notes and the wonderful rhythm with which the little fellow executed the song, even embellishing it now and then with a little grace-note.

This time my sister, who lately had given the bird the companionship, in an adjoining

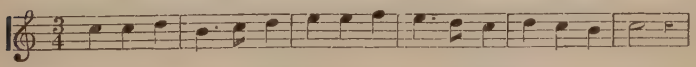
room however, of a canary, told me to be prepared for a great surprise. The canary, she said, had gradually learned the song from the bullfinch, first by single notes, then by whole bars, until, at the end of less than half a year, he had absolutely acquired the tune and sang it, also in the same key, as well as its unconscious master, the finch.

I told my sister I had always understood such a thing to be possible, and hardly as uncommon as she seemed to think. "Wait," she said, "you will hear—at least I hope you will whilst you are with me; it only happened once, and I really could not believe my ears then. . . ."

Well, it *did* happen, and this is what "it" was. I was sitting one afternoon at the cosy hour of the "Kaffeestündchen"—the five-o'clock tea of England—with my sister, when the bullfinch, in our room, commenced to sing:

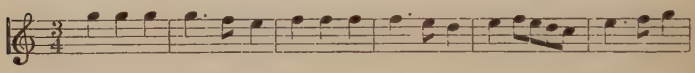


and then stopped for a moment, after which he repeated these two bars. Again he broke off and began once more, this time singing the first six bars of the tune:

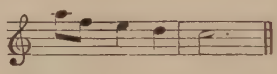


Here he stopped longer than before, and during the silence we, too, interrupted our talking,

hoping he would go on. Whilst we were waiting patiently, the interruption, evidently, lasted too long for the canary, for to my unutterable surprise and my sister's great gratification—it was this she had been waiting for—the canary in the next room *took up the song where the bullfinch had left off*, singing, lustily and jubilantly, and with what sounded like a conscious pride and satisfaction, the remainder of the tune :



to the very end :



. . . . . .

After an extended professional tour on the Continent during the winter of 1884–1885 we returned to London, where, in the spring of the following year, Jenny Lind having just resigned her position as Professor of Singing at the Royal College of Music, of which the genial George Grove was the director, I had the honour of being appointed her successor. This circumstance, as well as my repeated appearances at the concerts of the Bach Choir, then conducted by her husband, Otto Goldschmidt, brought me into rather frequent contact with the renowned couple, who, ever since my first appear-

ance in 1879, seemed to have formed an agreeable opinion of me—Jenny Lind, in her letters to me, invariably signed herself, " Ihre Kunstschwester " (" Your Art-sister ")—and I had now become a regular visitor at their home in Brompton, a perfect treasure-house of most interesting mementoes of the great singer's wonderful career, the history of which she often, when I happened to be her only guest at the tea-table, would illustrate by a little story. On one of these occasions I remember our coming across the programme of her first concert in the United States, and the story she told me in connexion with that is, I am sure, worthy to be retold :

The manager under whom Jenny Lind had made her first *tournée* in America in 1850, had been no other than the great Barnum, then known only as the most enterprising and successful menagerie- and circus-man of the age. The contract Jenny Lind had signed was, according to English ideas at that time, a most advantageous one. When, however, the great Prima Donna arrived on the other side of the Atlantic she found that, whereas in England and on the European continent she had appeared before audiences of 2000 or perhaps, at the utmost, 3000 people, in America she was called upon to sing in halls

capable of holding as many as 8000 and more. No ordinary concert halls being large enough to hold the vast number of people eager to hear the famous Swedish nightingale, railroad stations were temporarily transformed into temples of song, yea, her first appearance in New York, the memorable event when "Knox the hatter" paid 300 dollars for his seat, took place at Castle Garden, the vast receptacle for the thousands and thousands of immigrants whom the weekly steamers poured into the country. Naturally, Jenny Lind soon realised how out of all proportion to justice and equity the conditions were under which she had agreed to tour the United States, but also how it was now too late, a contract being a contract. A few days, however, after that first appearance, when Barnum was dining with her, she could not resist the temptation of telling him, in a very pleasant and good-humoured way, of her disappointment, and how she had had no idea, when signing the contract, that she would have to sing in halls three times as big as any she had ever appeared in before. Imagine her surprise when Barnum, without a moment's hesitation, took out of his pocket the precious document with Jenny Lind's signature, and, tearing it into little pieces, said to her, "Madam, send me your

lawyer to-morrow, and I will sign any contract he might see fit to submit to me."

The world at large will perhaps remember Barnum merely as the great showman, but to us, who know this rare little story, he will—to quote a phrase from Tennyson's *In Memoriam*—

> . . . ever bear without abuse
> The grand old name of gentleman.

One day, in 1880, Mr. Otto Goldschmidt, contemplating a performance by the Bach Choir of Brahms' German Requiem, had asked me if I would do him the favour of writing to Brahms with the object of ascertaining if the metronome marks at the head of the different movements of the Requiem should be strictly adhered to. This is the characteristic letter containing Brahms' answer :

VIENNA, *Feb.* 1880.

DEAR HENSCHEL—Your letter reaches me just as I am happening to be at home for a few days ; a very rare occurrence this winter, worse luck !

Post festum my best congratulations upon the success of your concert,[1] which indeed must have been splendid.

The question in your letter received to-day is somewhat obscure, indistinct ; I hardly know what

[1] On December 2, 1879, I had conducted at St. James's Hall the first performance in England of Brahms' *Triumphlied* for double-chorus and orchestra, Op. 55.

to answer: "If the indications by figures of the tempi in my Requiem should be strictly adhered to?"

Well—just as with all other music. I think here as well as with all other music the metronome is of no value. As far at least as my experience goes, everybody has, sooner or later, withdrawn his metronome marks. Those which can be found in my works—good friends have talked me into putting them there, for I myself have never believed that my blood and a mechanical instrument go well together. The so-called "elastic" tempo is moreover not a new invention. "Con discrezione" should be added to that as to many other things.

Is this an answer? I know no better one; but what I do know is that I indicate (without figures) my tempi, modestly, to be sure, but with the greatest care and clearness.

Remember me kindly to Mr. Goldschmidt, and tell him, please, that there is only one thing in the coming performance I dislike thinking of, and that is, that No. 5[1] will not be sung by his wife. I do wish I could have heard that once from her!

It will always remain a matter of great regret to me that, when I knew Jenny Lind, the days of her public performances as a soloist were over. I say, "as a soloist," for if during the first years of the Bach Choir concerts you had asked, on one of those occasions, who that interesting-looking lady was—there—in the front row of the sopranos, the lady with the somewhat stern expression in her face, and her

[1] The beautiful soprano solo, "Ye now are sorrowful."

hair done in the early Victorian fashion, as you can see it, for instance, in Winterhalter's well-known portrait of the youthful Queen, the answer would have been, "That's the conductor's wife, Jenny Lind."

I remember once, when we were talking about the technique of singing, her favouring me with a little illustration of her own ways and means, and I shall never forget my wonder when, asking me to watch the outside of her throat, she showed me how she used to sing the trill for which she had been so famous. During such a trill, which she continued for an astonishingly long time, increasing, decreasing, and again increasing it, her throat would be visibly quavering with the rapid pulsations of every succeeding little group of the two notes, exactly like the throat of a warbling canary bird. It was a marvellous performance. Although she could be rather brusque in expressing her opinion, and never hesitated to say what she had, and wanted, to say without mincing matters—more than one young lady who had entered Jenny Lind's house to sing to her and get her opinion, left it bathed in tears—she was a very kind, warm-hearted, charitable woman, exceedingly simple and unaffected. Many were the times when, after luncheon or tea, and I happened to be

the only guest, she would, on my taking leave, accompany me to the porch, there perhaps commencing a new topic of interest and, continuing it, leave the house with me, just as she stood, with no hat on, round the corner of Moreton Gardens, down the street, until I insisted on escorting her back.

At that period I had many private pupils in singing, especially from the United States, and some of my experiences in that respect were highly amusing. One morning I found among my mail a large advertising sheet, something like a poster, headed in big letters : Miss XYZ, the great Californian something or other—I think it was the usual nightingale. I had repeatedly seen before, in atlases, charts illustrating the comparative heights of the mountains and church-steeples of the world. Well, this was a similar sort of chart, only, instead of to the heights of mountains and cathedrals, it had reference to the voices of the famous prima donnas of the world. Down at the bottom was a poor A flat with the name, against it, of the unfortunate female who could boast of nothing higher than that ; then came a B natural with another celebrated name opposite, then a C sharp, and so on, until the apex was reached with an A flat an octave higher than the first-mentioned, and against

that wonderful achievement was placed in red emblazoned letters, twice as big as those of the poor rivals, the name of Miss XYZ. Wondering why this valuable document should have been sent to me, I opened the letter accompanying it. It was headed, in print, by the words, "Miss XYZ, Mr. So-and-so, manager." (When I showed it, a few days later, to my old friend Henry James, he exclaimed: "Why, my dear Henschel, this isn't a person, it's a *locality*!") And the letter, written from New York, ran as follows:

DEAR SIR—Miss XYZ, the great soprano whose fame on this continent has no doubt reached you before this, is sailing for England on Saturday fortnight, to put herself under your tuition. I am sure I need not point out to you the advantage which will accrue to you by her so doing. I should be much obliged if you would meet her on the arrival of the steamer at Liverpool. In a few weeks I expect to be in London myself, when I will call and consult with you as to the best way in which to place her before the British Public *in a chaste and dignified manner*.

I wonder, do my readers know me well enough by this time to answer correctly the question: Did I or did I not go to Liverpool to receive the precious charge?

XXIV

It was not long after my return to London that, strengthened by my three years' experience in the United States, during which I had conducted over a hundred concerts and four times as many rehearsals, I conceived the idea of doing for London something similar to what Higginson had done for Boston. I was, after all, even as a conductor, no stranger to the musical public of the metropolis — my conducting there, in 1879, of the first performance in England of Brahms' magnificent *Triumphlied* for double-chorus and orchestra having elicited a good deal of very friendly comment. The *Times* of December 3rd had even considered the concert, at which I also conducted Brahms' First Symphony in C Minor, "the most important event of an, up to the present, anything but interesting season. It happily combined a charitable purpose"—I had destined the proceeds to the Victoria Hospital for Children, of which Princess Louise, Marchioness of Lorne, whose singing teacher

I had the honour of being, was the patroness —" with artistic excellence. . . . For the performance we have nothing but praise, Herr Henschel proving himself as efficient and intelligent a conductor as he is an accomplished singer."

Moving, as I did, among a society which included a good many devoted lovers of music, I could not help becoming aware of the existence of a widely felt and growing sense of deprivation as regards orchestral music during the winter season. It will be remembered that in London proper there were at that time no orchestral concerts whatever until after Easter, when the Philharmonic Society and, since 1879, those "Orchestral Festival Concerts" founded by the violinist Hermann Franke and conducted by Hans Richter, under whose name they afterwards became famous, commenced their season. I thought, therefore, the time had come for making, at any rate, the experiment of establishing a series of orchestral concerts in London during the winter season. To do this on my own financial responsibility was, of course, out of the question. Fortunately, however, there were among my musical friends a sufficiently great number whose wealth was equalled by their love of the art as well as by their kindness. Their number being, moreover,

augmented by personal friends of the Princess Louise, to whom that gracious lady had most kindly given me introductions for the purpose, it was in a surprisingly short time, though not without hard and by no means always agreeable work, that I was able to make public the list of guarantors, which, as a bit of history, musical and social, will, I believe, be found sufficiently interesting to be quoted in full:

The Marchioness of Waterford
The Dowager Countess of Airlie
The Countess of Desart
The Countess of Lathom
The Countess of Pembroke
Viscountess Folkestone
Lady George Hamilton
Louisa, Lady Ashburton
Lady Blanche Hozier
Lady Mary Loyd
Lady Agneta Montagu
Lady Sandhurst
Lady Wantage
Lady Windsor
Lady Colvile
Lady Farrer
Lady Goldsmid
Lady Paget
The Hon. Mrs. Stafford Northcote
The Hon. Mrs. R. Talbot
The Hon. Mrs. Eliot Yorke
Mrs. Arthur Cohen
Mrs. Conrad
Mrs. Earle
Mrs. Douglas Freshfield
Mrs. C. A. Fyffe
Mrs. Lawrence Harrison
Mrs. Robert Harrison
Mrs. Edwin Henty
Mrs. Francis Jeune
Mrs. Sam. Joshua
Mrs. Charles J. Leaf
Mrs. Ernest Leverson
Mrs. George H. Lewis
Mrs. Alfred Morrison
Mrs. John Nix
Mrs. Edward Raphael
Mrs. George Raphael
Mrs. Victor Rubens
Mrs. Granville Ryder
Mrs. Alfred Schiff
Mrs. Schlesinger
Miss Flora M. Smith
Miss Tatlock
Miss Van de Weyer
Mrs. S. Winkworth
Mrs. Edmond R. Wodehouse

The Lord Chancellor (Lord Herschell)
The Duke of Westminster, K.G.
The Earl Beauchamp
The Earl of Dysart
The Earl of Lathom
The Earl of Wharncliffe
Viscount Barrington
Lord William Compton, M.P.
Lord Revelstoke
Lord Hillingdon
Alfred de Rothschild, Esq.
Baron Ferd. de Rothschild, M.P.
Sir Fred. Leighton, Bart., P.R.A.
Sir John E. Millais, Bart., R.A.
Sir Thomas Brassey, K.C.B., M.P.
Sir Henry Thompson, F.R.C.S.
Sir Richard Webster, Q.C., M.P.
The Rt.-Hon. A. J. Balfour, M.P.
The Hon. Spencer G. Lyttelton
Baron Herman de Stern
Hamilton Aïdé, Esq.
L. Alma Tadema, Esq., R.A.
Arthur Anderson, Esq.
Wm. Asch, Esq.
Gustav Aschenheim, Esq.
Gottlieb Bauer, Esq.
S. H. Beddington, Esq.
Alfred Benecke, Esq.
Egmont Bieber, Esq.
Leo Bonn, Esq.
Bernhard Bosanquet, Esq.
G. H. Boughton, Esq., A.R.A.
Ernest de Bunsen, Esq.
Julius Cyriax, Esq.
G. Ellissen, Esq.
O. von Ernsthausen, Esq.
John M. Fletcher, Esq.
Cyril Flower, Esq., M.P.
E. H. Friedlaender, Esq.
Henry Graham, Esq.
Paul Hardy, Esq.
Lawrence Harrison, Esq.
Robert Harrison, Esq.
Max Hecht, Esq.
John P. Heseltine, Esq.
Ferd. Hess, Esq.
Philipp Hirschfeld, Esq.
John R. Hollond, Esq.
Wynnard Hooper, Esq.
Lieut.-General Hopkinson
G. Howard, Esq.
Luke Ionides, Esq.
G. Jacobson, Esq.
Henry James, Esq.
Sam. Joshua, Esq.
Albert Kahn, Esq.
Charles Kahn, Esq.
John Kemp, Esq.
J. M. Koecher, Esq.
Morton Latham, Esq.
H. L. W. Lawson, Esq., M.P.
Charles J. Leaf, Esq.
Walter Leaf, Esq.

Julius Levis, Esq.
Arthur James Lewis, Esq.
George H. Lewis, Esq.
Wm. Lidderdale, Esq.
Arthur Lucas, Esq.
Henry Lucas, Esq.
Edmund Macrory, Esq.
Henry F. Makins, Esq.
D. Meinertzhagen, Esq.
L. Messel, Esq.
Carl Meyer, Esq.
Bingham Mildmay, Esq.
A. B. Mitford, Esq., C.B.
S. Morley, Esq., M.P.
Charles Morley, Esq.
Howard Morley, Esq.
T. Douglas Murray, Esq.
Gustav Natorp, Esq.
John Nicholas, Esq.
E. Oesterley, Esq.
Henry Oppenheim, Esq.
Wm. S. Playfair, Esq. M.D.
Frederick Pollock, Esq.
Henry Pollock, Esq.
Edw. J. Poynter, Esq., R.A.
G. W. Rathbone, Esq.
Henry Roche, Esq.
George J. Romanes, Esq., F.R.S.
A. Rommel, Esq.
Victor Rubens, Esq.
John C. Salt, Esq.
Leo Frank Schuster, Esq.
James Stern, Esq.
Thos. Threlfall, Esq.
Henry F. Tiarks, Esq.
Albert Vickers, Esq.
M. Wetzlar, Esq.
F. A. White, Esq.
Henry White, Esq.

And in the spring of 1886 I had the pleasure and gratification of announcing the first series—to commence in the autumn of that year—of "The London Symphony Concerts," as I had decided to call them, and under which name they are still flourishing. To my utmost satisfaction and delight the artistic success of the first concert, the programme of which included Mozart's Overture to *The Magic Flute*; Beethoven's Concerto for Pianoforte, Violin, and Violoncello, played by Mme. Haas, Mr. Richard Gompertz, then Professor of the Violin at the Royal College of Music, and Signor

Piatti; Brahms' Second Symphony in D; the Good-Friday's music from Wagner's *Parsifal*; and the Prelude to the third act of Mackenzie's opera, *The Troubadour*, was considerable, and the attitude of the whole press, with one or two exceptions, most friendly and cordial. If I here quote from what the papers of the day had to say about the scheme in general, and the first concert in particular, I do so partly to supplement future histories of Victorian music, but also to afford my readers some of the amusement which especially one of the above-mentioned exceptions caused me and my friends.

The Times.—The dearth of good orchestral music in London during the late autumn and winter months, when such music is even more likely to be appreciated than in the season properly so-called, has been the subject of general complaint. Herr Richter's autumn campaign is generally confined to three concerts, and after that lovers of symphonic music who shun a journey to the Crystal Palace are met by the vacuum which art no less than nature abhors. To fill up that vacuum many attempts have been made, but none of them have so far proved successful; none, indeed, could show anything approaching the conditions of permanent success which augur well for the immediate future of the London Symphony concerts. Mr. Henschel, their founder and conductor, is, fortunately for himself, a man of business as well as a sound musician. Before disclosing his scheme to

the general public he collected a guarantee fund sufficient to carry on his enterprise for more seasons than one, even should the worst befall. Having thus secured the *nervus rerum*, he set about engaging an excellent orchestra quite capable of grappling with the most difficult problems of modern music under a musician who, although chiefly known among us as a singer of great intelligence and refinement, can boast of extensive experience and many achievements as a conductor in America. Mr. Henschel's beat is decisive; he marks every point without confusing the musicians by too many "cues," as inexperienced and over-zealous conductors are apt to do. The performance of Brahms' Symphony may be taken as an example. It was worked out with minute care, without wanting in spirit. The first and last movements especially were played to perfection. . . .

The Daily Telegraph.—Mr. Henschel has great energy; his enthusiasm is that of a thorough artist, and he is a musician qualified by wide experience and sound judgment for the conductor's delicate and difficult functions. The performance of Brahms' Symphony, conducted with admirable skill, was of a high order and significant of the best possible results to follow. . . .

Daily News.—Mr. Henschel has already gained distinction here in the several capacities of singer, composer, and conductor, and his duties in this last respect were fulfilled last night with care and intelligence. . . .

St. James's Gazette.—Mr. Henschel deserves the thanks of the musical public for instituting a series of high-class orchestral concerts which, at comparatively short intervals, will occupy the autumn and winter months from now until March. These

concerts promise to be of great interest; and the programme of last night included no small number of fine works. The orchestra is well composed, and Mr. Henschel is already known to be one of the most competent of living conductors. . . .

The Globe.—Throughout the evening Mr. Henschel, who is favourably known to English amateurs as singer and composer, and who has had considerable experience in America and elsewhere as an orchestral conductor, conducted with much ability. . . .

Pall Mall Gazette.—We congratulate Mr. Henschel heartily on his *début* as an orchestral conductor. He is evidently a master of that art. . . .

Standard.—Mr. Henschel's reputation as an earnest and thorough musician is sufficient warranty that a high artistic tone will be maintained throughout the entire series. . . . The Allegretto of the Symphony only escaped its customary encore by the firmness and good sense displayed by the conductor in not yielding to an absurd demand, and it is sincerely to be trusted that the London Symphony Concerts will set a pattern in the way of abstention from repetitions. . . . Mr. Henschel conducted throughout the evening without the score; his labours towards the attainment of success were thoroughly appreciated, and at the close he was warmly called back to the platform. . . .

Sunday Times (Nov. 21).—New musical enterprises are slow to win favour with our conservative public, which beats every other public for the pertinacity with which it sticks to its old loves. We may not exactly be a "nation of shopkeepers," but our commercial instincts are strong, and we like to feel sure that we get a satisfactory *quid pro quo* when we lay our money out. There should be every chance,

therefore, for the individual who offers a good article at a reasonable figure, especially when the article supplies a particular want. Knowing all of which, Mr. Henschel may "take heart of grace" and hope one day to find the London Symphony Concerts firmly planted on excellent soil and yielding the best of fruit. That the sapling is safe for two years, thanks to a substantial guarantee-fund, is a great point in its favour. There will be ample time for the roots to spread and gather strength. Really, though, we ought to make up our minds quickly about this new venture. To begin with, it fills up a decided gap. In London proper we have no regular orchestral concerts during the winter months, and there is no reason why we should be without them. On the contrary, the fact that we are so is a disgrace only second to that which attaches to another vacuum in our winter musical existence—the absence of opera. This admitted, only one question needs follow: Is Mr. Henschel's undertaking of a nature to supply in worthy fashion the missing quantity? I answer, without hesitation, Yes. The eclectic spirit that pervades his scheme, the assurance that native talent will receive its fair share of exposition, the excellence of the players who constitute the orchestra, afford abundant justification for my reply, apart from the promise of high achievement held out at the opening concert in St. James's Hall on Wednesday. Mr. Henschel's capacity as a conductor has to be judged from a lofty standard. . . . Like Richter he conducts without book, and reaps all the consequent advantage of an unbroken attention to what the orchestra is doing. He has the latter well under control, and evidently possesses the power of moulding it entirely to his will. . . . A numerous and enthusi-

astic audience attended the concert, applauding Mr. Henschel vigorously after each item and with special warmth at the end of the symphony. Altogether the new venture could not have been launched under more favourable auspices.

Now for the precious *Echo*:

According to announcement, the first of sixteen Symphony Concerts took place on Wednesday, the 17th, under the conductorship of Mr. Henschel, whose boldness in adventure decidedly exceeds his judgment, for even the admirable Richter Concerts, with an artistic combination too far in advance of Mr. Henschel's to be named in the same category, are seldom allowed to exceed four, or at least (*sic !*) eight concerts during any one season. There is certainly one feature of Mr. Henschel's enterprise deserving of all praise, and that is, the candour which impels (!) the entrepreneur to relieve the public mind from the fear that these sixteen concerts will be poured out upon the long-suffering ear under the specious guise of a "charitable" enterprise. Whatever the London Symphony Concerts may ultimately prove to be, at any rate they no longer mask the plain fact that they are a speculation and, judging by the characteristics of the first night's performance, one which may require more charity to support than when, as formerly, that plea has been urged for claiming patronage. The truth is, and Mr. Henschel seemingly has yet to realise it, that symphonic works have been, and can only be, given with proper effect by orchestral performers accustomed to play together under an experienced chief. As a vocalist of the Teutonic order, Mr. Henschel may continue to win the confidence of his

German listeners, especially whilst he substitutes enthusiasm for the purer canons of art (!), but to maintain public favour for sixteen occasions, under the assumption of giving symphonic works, challenges an amount of criterion which neither past nor present experiences render it safe to rely on. The instrumental works were fairly rendered and, perhaps, with sufficient merit to form an advertisement for the threatened fifteen performances to come.

I afterwards understood the writer to have been a man who, a year or two before me, had tried his hand at conducting a series of orchestral concerts in London; with what success may be gathered from a story which went the round of musicians at the time, telling how the gentleman opened the first concert with "God save the Queen," which he began conducting in *four-fourths* time, heroically continuing until Mr. Carrodus—later also my excellent and esteemed leader of the violins—whispered to him, "*Try three!*"

Well, if the attitude of the public towards the new enterprise left nothing to complain of, that of my brother- and sister-musicians exceeded my keenest expectations. Quite a good many of the soloists whom I had asked to appear at the concerts expressed their desire, or their willingness, to do so "for love" or else for what in professional language is termed a nominal fee, and their list is a very

notable one, including, among others, the names of Lady Hallé, Joachim, Arbos, Burmester, Ondriçek, Sauret, César Thomson, Ysaye, Maurice Sons, Piatti, Popper, Hugo Becker, Robert Hausmann, Jean Gerardy, Mme. Essipoff, Mme. Haas, Fanny Davies, Agnes Zimmermann, Sir Charles Hallé, Paderewski, Max Pauer, Mme. Albani, Brema, Evangeline Florence, Nordica, Lillian Henschel, Hope Glenn, Edward Lloyd, William Shakespeare, Santley. The last named, most genial of good fellows, returned the cheque I had sent him after his first appearance at these concerts, with the words :

. . . You are an artist and I am only too pleased to have been able to assist you. I hope you will accept my services as a slight token of my friendship and goodwill toward you. . . .

Another letter of his of the same year, 1887, was received by me in the United States, whither I had gone with my wife for a short professional tour after the close of the London Symphony Concerts' first season. In it he says :

If you have time some day I shall be glad to hear how you are doing over the water, and what is doing generally. I think I ought to go over again some of these days. I like the American audiences ; if they do not always like what I like, they know what they do like, and you know what to give them, which

I have always found a great difficulty in England. There is such a deal of classical talk and unclassical taste. . . . I presume you intend carrying on the Symphony concerts next season. Recollect I am always good for one of them. . . .

All this was most gratifying and encouraging to me, and I made up my mind to persevere. Franz Liszt had been in London during the season of 1886, and I would have given much to have him play at one of my concerts, but his age would not permit him to take part in any but social functions in his honour, private and semi-public, at one of which however—a reception given for him at the Grosvenor Gallery by the late Sir Coutts Lindsay—he was persuaded, to the delight of the guests, to sit down at the piano and play. I remember, on the following day, meeting the then representative of "Bechstein's," who, still quite excited, told me—to my regret I had been prevented from being present—how wonderfully Liszt had played on that occasion.

"What did he play?" I asked.

"Why—Bechstein, of course!" was the answer.

XXV

During the summer of 1887 the Robert Harrisons—Mr. Harrison had taken a great interest in the London Symphony Concerts, even to the extent of most generously acting as Hon. Treasurer—had a charming house near Henley-on-Thames, " Wargrave Hill," and it was there, in August, I first met Sargent. Already at that time some portraits of his, sent to the Royal Academy from Paris, and, among others done in England, that of Mrs. Robert Harrison, had made quite a stir in London art circles; personally, however, he was but little known in England, few people as yet realising the tremendous power with which he was soon to carry everything before him in his truly triumphal progress. As to myself I knew little more of him than that he was a painter, but felt myself quite uncommonly attracted by his personality from the first. For one who was already thought and made much of by those who *did* know him and his work, he struck me as exceedingly

modest, inclined, I thought, to hide his light under a bushel. He had built himself a little floating studio on a punt on the river, where it was a delight to see him, a splendid specimen of manly physique, clad—it was an exceptionally hot and dry summer, I remember—in a white flannel shirt and trousers, a silk scarf around the waist, and a small straw hat with coloured ribbon on his large head, sketching away all day, and once in a while skilfully manipulating the punt to some other coign of vantage. A very proficient executant on the piano, he was exceedingly fond of music, a subject on which he talked with the knowledge and understanding of one who had made it a serious study rather than a pastime. It was perhaps this which brought us nearer and made us the good friends I am happy and grateful to say we have been ever since. It was less than two years later that he painted the portrait of which the frontispiece to this book is as faithful a reproduction as, lacking the colour, it is possible to obtain of an oil-painting. I had only a few sittings, certainly not more than five. "Standings," I should rather say, for he made me stand on a platform and sing—from *Tristan and Isolde* by preference—whilst he was at work. How I used to look forward to those Sunday mornings! For besides his always

interesting and often most instructive conversation—I could of course not go on singing all the time—it was a great delight to watch him as he was constantly and intently studying my face, talking and painting at the same time. Now and then he would slowly and deliberately recede about a dozen steps from the easel, look at me steadfastly, stop for a moment and suddenly, the brush lifted ready for action and without ever taking his eyes off me, make a dash for the canvas on which he then recorded his impression, generally accompanying the act by contentedly humming a little tune.

Never shall I forget that Sunday morning in February '89 when, the final sitting over, we put the wet canvas into the frame and, in a hansom, took it to my house in Bedford Gardens, where we were expected to luncheon. My wife's exceeding delight and gratitude on seeing the fine painting, and the unbounded admiration expressed also by our other guests —dear Arthur Cecil and a Mrs. Toberentz, a sculptor's wife and daughter of an old Wiesbaden friend of mine, whom we had asked for Sargent's special benefit because of her extraordinary beauty—seemed really to gratify him, and a very happy jolly little party we were that day.

A week later my wife and I, with our little daughter, were to leave for New York on a

tour through the States, and I remember the day before our sailing as one of the busiest of that year and a particularly memorable one. In the morning—it was Wednesday, February the 27th—I conducted a rehearsal of the Ninth Symphony with the Leeds Choir, who had come to London for the last concert of the series that afternoon. After the rehearsal, to my utter surprise, the members of the Orchestra remained in their seats—a most unusual proceeding, conductors will agree—and my first bassoon, the most picturesque member of the orchestra, with his fine head and flowing white beard—who does not remember that excellent musician, splendid old Wotton?—stepped down with an oaken case, out of which he took a beautiful silver inkstand and a pair of silver candlesticks which, with a few affectionate words, he presented to me on behalf of the orchestra, touchingly adding that, there having been a little surplus, they hoped Mrs. Henschel would kindly accept it in the shape of the little silver scent-bottle he then produced. . . . Those dear boys of the old London Symphony Orchestra—how I loved them! The concert in the afternoon, consisting of Mendelssohn's *Walpurgis-Night* and the Ninth Symphony, went off beautifully, and we hurried home as quickly as possible

to receive Princess Louise who had most graciously announced herself for tea, to say good-bye to us. The afternoon was marked by an amusing little episode. Before leaving us the Princess had taken our small daughter Helen into her arms, kissing her and making her promise to write her a letter from America. I was then accompanying Her Royal Highness to the door when, feeling some one pulling at her skirt, she turned round and saw little Helen looking up to her and calling "Princess Louise?" "Yes, dear?". . . "*Have you got a number?*" The Princess, smilingly, "What do you mean, dear?" . . . "You asked me to write to you—but what is your number?" . . . I still hear the Princess's hearty laughter as she stooped down to the little girlie for another farewell kiss. And Helen kept her promise. Not long after our arrival in New York she brought me the letter she had, quite unaided, written to the Princess, and which I forwarded in the original. It ended with a postscript: "Please give my love to *His Majesty-ship Lord Lorne.*"

. . . . . .

But the day's work was not done yet. In the evening I had to sing at a Gallery-Club Concert and was quite ready for my rest on coming home a little before midnight when

another surprise kept me awake with pleasure a little longer still: a letter from Sargent, to whom I had written thanking him once more for the portrait, before leaving.

"My dear Henschel," he writes, "if I had not a sitting to-morrow morning from Irving, I should go and say good-bye to you at the train for the pleasure of seeing you once more. I thank you for having written, and must tell you what a great pleasure it has been to me that my venture of painting you has resulted in such a generous expression of satisfaction on your part and Mrs. Henschel's, greater than I have ever met with, and that with my means I have given you the pleasure that you always give me with yours. And I should be quite satisfied with my portrait if it created in you the sentiment of sympathy which prompted me to do it. I hope that you and Mrs. Henschel and little Helen will have a pleasant and safe journey, and I shall see you soon after your return—perhaps at Baireuth. . . ."

Both that letter and the portrait are precious possessions, and it would be difficult to say which one should be prouder of. Sargent was then a man of thirty-three and already famous. . . . Ye Rembrandts and Titians of the present day, "read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest"!

XXVI

In 1888 I invited Brahms to conduct some of his works and Hans von Bülow to play at my concerts. Their characteristic letters in answer to my request will, I think, be deemed of sufficient interest to be quoted in full. Brahms, from Vienna, writes :

Dear H.—I thank you for your kind invitation, but am somewhat vexed at having to hear from you, too, that common rumour of my dislike of the English, etc. . . .

You really ought to know, having heard it from me often enough, that *solely* love of comfort, laziness if you like, and aversion to concerts generally, prevent my going to England, but equally so to St. Petersburg or Paris.

That my persistent refusal could be open to misinterpretation I am well aware of. It would, however, be hopeless to explain all this, and to tell the people how it has absolutely nothing to do with music if on the one hand we here have a Bohemian Cabinet or you over there a splendid opium-war, etc., etc.

It's all vanity anyhow !

Again thanks.

Yours, J. B.

Bülow, from Frankfort-on-the-Main, commences his letter with a most flattering compliment, prompted, perhaps, by an orchestral experience of the God-save-the-Queen-in-four-fourths-time kind :

"Much as I should like," he writes, "to accept your gratifying invitation to play at one of your London Symphony Concerts—and I confess I would not wish to be accompanied by any orchestra on the banks of the Thames except under your conductorship—I fear there are insurmountable obstacles in the way. You may perhaps have heard that by undertaking several functions in North German cities, I have permanently tied myself to such an extent as to be hardly able to spare the time for a longish trip, least of all to fix a date so long ahead. To come to the opening concert of your season is moreover 'superlatively impossible,' for the reason that in that epoch falls the preparation for the Mozart Cycle at the Hamburg theatre. My advancing 'treacherous age,' too, renders the risk of hurried journeys unadvisable. . . ."

A second attempt on my part, during the following year, was, much to my regret, equally unsuccessful. This time Bülow's answer came from Berlin, and ran as follows :

. . . Rarely has a *non possumus* come so hard to me as that which I am obliged to pronounce in reply to your honouring invitation. But you will understand how I cannot give up old obligations in favour of—very likely more interesting—new ones. And since the gift of ubiquity is, alas, denied me, there

remains the absolute impossibility of playing in London on March 6. I have to conduct here on the 5th and to play on the 8th, and every day of the season is taken up with rehearsals and concerts and opera in Berlin, Bremen, and Hamburg. I am heartily ashamed to be obliged to meet your warm-blooded eloquence with sober mathematical explanations, but promises must be kept, if by not keeping them you would be injuring other interests. Dunque—i miei più vivi rincrescimenti; sono dolente più di ogni dire, ma che vuole: "L'homme n'est pas parfait, mon président," said the accused parricide. In haste—between two rehearsals of the Irish symphony, in C. V. St.'s [1] presence, and Brahms' Double Concerto.—I am most truly yours,

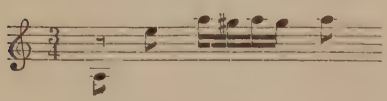
H. von Bülow.

Later however in the same year, after the continental season was over and the London Symphony Concerts had completed the second year of their existence, Bülow came to London for the purpose of giving a cycle of Beethoven recitals, and his bringing with him a *protégé* of his, a tenor who was to make his first appearance in England under Bülow's auspices, recalled to me an amusing incident, of which that tenor was the rather sorry hero.

I had, in the spring of 1886, found myself arriving in Cologne one fine Sunday afternoon, when, on the way from the station to the hotel, my eyes happened to fall on the announcement,

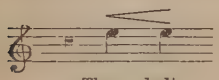
[1] Charles Villiers Stanford.

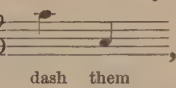
on a big poster, of a performance, that very afternoon, of Handel's *Messiah*. The cast was a very attractive one, including the prima-donna of the Dresden Opera and the famous "Helden-Tenor" of another of the Court opera-houses of Germany. I looked at my watch: three o'clock. The performance, under Ferdinand Hiller, had commenced at two. I shall be just in time, I thought, for the great air, "Thou shalt dash them." How I should love to hear that splendid piece of musical rhetoric rendered by an operatic "tenore robusto," who will not hesitate to give true emphasis to that high A natural towards the end of the air on the word "dash," and just revel in it. . . . So, after depositing my valise at the hotel, I hurried to the Gürzenich where, as I had anticipated, the bass was just finishing the glorious air, "Why do the nations." Now the orchestra struck up that fine introduction

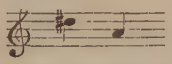
 etc., during which

the great tenor, who evidently thought himself the "star of the afternoon" slowly got up, displaying across his faultless shirt-front —it was the custom then on the continent for gentlemen to wear evening-dress at any official function, even in the morning—a huge

gold medal, something like a first prize at a horse-show, suspended from a red ribbon beneath his collar. Having, with the last bars of the introduction, raised himself to his full height—a fine-looking chap with a splendid physique—he inflated his huge chest and began. I confess I was somewhat disappointed; though not bad, it was nothing out of the usual. But wait, I thought, for that high A natural! I got quite excited in anticipation when it came to those two preparatory crotchets



which to me are like the wide-circling, swinging movement of the woodman's axe before its tremendous force strikes the tree. Imagine, therefore, my disappointment, nay, my indignation, when those two notes were followed, not by that glorious sweeping octave 

, but a pitiable augmented Fourth:  ! It was as if a rider to the hounds, supposed by the onlooker to make joyfully for a fence in the stirring passion of the chase, all of a sudden, instead of clearing it, dismounted and, opening a gate, meekly led his mount through.

Well, it was that gentleman who came to London in 1888 and was to sing Beethoven's

beautiful song-cycle "To the distant Beloved." A few days before the concert I accidentally met him at a restaurant in Regent Street, where I had luncheon with a friend who had previously known him and, seeing him enter the room and look for a seat, invited him to join us. We were introduced, and though inwardly flushing at the remembrance of that Cologne experience when Mr. X had spoiled Handel's air and my enjoyment, I was extremely polite to the offender. Luncheon over, I took out my cigar-case, and, handing it across the table, offered him one of the fragrant weeds. "Oh, *dear* no—thanks," he declined with a deprecatory wave of the hand—"if I were to smoke a cigar now I could not sing tenor for four or five days!" This was too much. Oblivious of all tenets of tact and good taste, I burst out—I really *could* not help myself—"Then, I am sure, you must, four or five days before the *Messiah* performance in Cologne two years ago, have smoked a particularly strong cigar!"

Whether or not it be better for a singer to refrain from smoking altogether is a question which may be answered one way or the other, but it seemed to me so utterly silly for a singer who *does* smoke, to think the smoking of a cigar on, say, a Monday, could in any way

affect his singing on the Thursday following. Either you know how to sing or you don't. In the first case, nothing which otherwise agrees with your health could possibly have an injurious effect on your voice or your art of using it. Tichatschek, the great tenor who had the distinction of being the first Rienzi as well as the first Tannhäuser—in 1842 and 1845 respectively—used to smoke from ten to twelve cigars a day. I heard him sing Lohengrin in Dresden—and very finely—when he was sixty-two years old. And I have in my possession a photograph of another great Tannhäuser, Albert Niemann, taken in his eightieth year. The lapel of his dress-coat is completely covered with stars and medals, but the proud expression in his face seems due less to these distinctions than to the big cigar he holds between the fingers of his right hand, evidently waiting for the photographer to hurry up and let him have it between his lips again.

It must have been about that time that I was sitting in my study one morning when a card was brought up to me, "Antoine Strakosch." "Oh," I thought, "one of that famous family of concert-managers—I wonder what he wants." Although now remembered by but very few people, the name of Strakosch was quite a familiar one a generation ago.

The two brothers, Maurice and Max (not to be confounded with the famous "Max and Moritz" of Wilhelm Busch's creation) were impresarios of high standing; Maurice, Adelina Patti's brother-in-law and agent, having also had some reputation as a musician and teacher of singing. "Show the gentleman up, please!" And in walked a little man whose outward appearance at once suggested some connexion with the musical profession other than British. I don't know why it is, but somehow or other that calling everywhere, except in Great Britain, puts its hall-mark, or perhaps I should say music-hall-mark on its professors.

Parry, except for his moustache, might pass for an admiral of the fleet; Stanford for an attorney-general; Elgar for a cavalry officer; Mackenzie for the president of a Royal Medical Society, but about the profession of a continental musician no mistake seems possible.

After introducing himself in perfect French, which afterwards he changed into an equally excellent English, as a cousin of his two renowned namesakes, he brought me the friendly greetings of the director of a well-known Concert Society in Amsterdam, for whom my wife and I had fulfilled some engagements only the year previous, and, in the name of that gentleman, came, he said, to ask if we happened

to be free to come over immediately after Easter for four concerts, in Amsterdam, Rotterdam, the Hague, and Utrecht. In that case he was authorized to settle the matter as to dates and terms at once, and pay me the sum of £25 down as a sort of earnest-money. Consulting my engagement-book I found, Easter being still some time ahead, that we could just manage four concerts then, whereupon he began making suggestions for our programmes. If so far he had already given proof of his perfect familiarity with all things musical in those four towns, he now astonished me by seeming to be acquainted with all the programmes we had previously given there. "In your place," he would say, "I should sing again Loewe's 'Erlking' in Amsterdam, where the people still speak of it, whilst Mrs. Henschel should by all means repeat her inimitable rendering of Schumann's 'Der Nussbaum'"; or, on my proposing a certain song, he would reject it as too serious, or for some other good reason, and recommend another item of my repertoire. Well, the dates having been finally decided upon, he took out of his pocket-book a draft on a London Bank, signed by that Amsterdam Concert-Director, remarking that, as it was made out for £50, I'd perhaps not mind giving him my cheque for £25 in exchange. . . . Of

course not! Whilst I was writing it, he begged me to please not cross it, as he had no bank-account in London. . . . Of course! . . . Just then the luncheon-bell rang, and after asking me if I would not do him the honour of lunching with him at his club—The Travellers' I think it was—which I gratefully declined, "Mr. Strakosch" took his leave, and I joined my wife at luncheon. I had hardly commenced telling her of Mr. Strakosch's visit and its object, when I abruptly sprang out of my chair without more than an "Excuse me," and, snatching my hat in the lobby, ran out of the house, jumped into the first hansom I met: "London & County Bank, High Street . . . Quick!" . . . and five minutes later I was informed by the clerk that my cheque, the payment of which I had come to stop, had been cashed ten minutes before, and the one the rascal had given me was a very clever forgery, not worth a farthing.

No doubt my readers will have guessed long before this that the man was a knave and I a fool; but such, on the one hand, was the perfection of the gentleman's composure and his talent for swindling, and, on the other, the simplicity of my faith in the original goodness of man that not until "Mr. Strakosch" had actually disappeared from my sight did the

first glimpse of suspicion dawn upon the horizon of my intellect. Mortified, as it was only natural I should have been, at finding myself thus duped, I could not help admiring the ingenuity of the fellow, and somehow congratulated myself on having got off so comparatively cheaply. When, in the evening of that day, in the artists' room at St. James's Hall I described my experience to some of my colleagues, they wondered how it was I had not read of the man in the papers which, it seemed, had been exposing his doings for the last month or so. In one case his ingenuity had been so extraordinary as to deserve special mention. He had played exactly the same trick on a friend of mine, a very famous tenor, who, like me, fell into the clever trap, but, more fortunate, or perhaps quicker than I had been, arrived at his bank in time to stop the payment of the cheque, also for £25, he had given to "Mr. Strakosch." When this gentleman, on presenting it to the clerk half an hour later, was informed that they had orders not to cash the cheque, he, evidently aware of the existing law by which you cannot arrest a man without a warrant, took it very calmly. Expressing to the clerk his wonder why this should be so, he quietly walked out of the building. Outside, however, what should he do? Drive to the

"Princes' Hall, Piccadilly!" This was at that time a very charming little concert-hall, excellent for sound, and in great demand for chamber-music and other recitals. Having asked to see the manager and introduced himself as concert-agent and impresario from Paris, he wished to know on which dates he could have the hall for four concerts he intended giving in London with some famous French artists. The dates agreed upon, the manager, on "Mr. Strakosch" pretending to be ready to depart, politely remarked it was the custom (as if the fellow had not known and built his plan on it!) to pay a deposit. "Oh," he quietly exclaimed, "is that so? . . . Of course. . . . I understand. . . . How much?" "Ten pounds." . . . "Very well," taking out his pocket-book. . . . "So sorry, I am afraid I have not as much on me . . . oh no, wait a moment, here is Mr. X's cheque, will that do?" "Certainly," replied the honest manager, recognizing the familiar and, of course, genuine signature of the famous tenor, took the cheque after having made "Mr. Strakosch" endorse it, and handed him the change in three clean, beautiful Bank of England notes of £5 each!

Now I call this genius. When, about half a year later, "Mr. Strakosch"—his real name was Ullmann, and he had actually been an

impresario of some standing at the beginning of his career—was at last brought to bay, caught and sentenced, it was with deep sympathy and pity I thought of how useful a member of society this talented man might have been, had his moral faculties been led in the right direction, and wondered on whose head rested the responsibility for the shipwreck of that life.

XXVII

In June 1890 it was my great privilege to conduct the orchestral concert which introduced to the English public a musician-pianist, who, by virtue of his striking personality no less than the power and poetry of his interpretations, aided, as they were, by an unimpeachable technique, leaped with one bound into the place Anton Rubinstein had held for so long in the hearts of British music-lovers; and that notwithstanding the fact of his being heralded at first as "The Lion of the Paris season," an error of judgment on the part of an over-zealous impresario which at that time was, if anything, apt to prejudice the public rather to the disadvantage of a newcomer than otherwise.

Tempora mutantur! Twenty-five years ago musical events of real merit used to be announced by the mere mention of the works to be performed and the names of the executants. Even so innocent a designation therefore as

"Lion of the Paris Season" was considered somewhat unusual and against the canons of professional etiquette. What would people have then thought of advertisements such as you may read nowadays, like "Mr. So-and-so, fresh from his triumphs in America, or South Africa, or Australia," or "Wagner's wonderful music" —to *tableaux vivants* from *Parsifal* at one of the Music Halls—"rendered in thirty minutes by a double orchestra," or of the publication even, intended to prove artistic worth and superiority, of the actual "takings" of artists during their "phenomenal" tour, etc., etc.? Will there, I wonder, be a reaction in this respect, as is sure to come some day in our beloved art, when licentiousness will no longer be taken for independence, brutality for strength; when order and sanity will again take the place of eccentricity and morbidness, when the highest mission of music will once more be thought to consist in the lifting of humanity for the time being from all that is of the earth earthy into the purer, holier sphere of an ideal Heaven? God grant it.

Well, to return to the new pianist. The simple announcement, after his first appearance, of his name "Paderewski" was quite sufficient to fill St. James's Hall with crowds of enthusiastic listeners such as, in the case of a single

artist, it had not known since the days of the great Russian. Very soon there was hardly an evening reception or garden-party, or other social function at which the fascinating Pole could not be seen, the centre of attraction, surrounded by a host of admirers of both sexes. On one of the unforgettable Sunday mornings which it was my good fortune to spend in the studio of Burne-Jones, playing the organ and singing whilst that kind and gentle master was painting, I took Paderewski with me to introduce him to Burne-Jones, who, as I had expected, was immediately and greatly struck by the exquisitely delicate, pre-Raphaelitic head, and on the spot asked its happy possessor to sit for him—a request the cheerful granting of which resulted in one of the finest portraits the pencil of the great master ever produced, and that in spite of his considering my playing and singing—according to an entry in his diary—"good for the emotions, but bad for the drawing."

What a lovable man Burne-Jones was! His very voice was sympathetic to a degree and, with its musical inflexions, added a peculiar charm to whatever fell from his lips. I shall never forget the last time I saw him. It was at one of those most enjoyable dinner-parties for which the hospitable house, in Hyde Park

Gate, of Monsieur and Madame Blumenthal was famous. The spirit of gentle Bohemianism which pervaded the atmosphere on these occasions was just after the heart of Burne-Jones, who could not abide stiffness and conventionality. The rules of precedence, for instance, were completely disregarded, and you might have seen "Monsieur"—woe to the hapless guest who, in the hearing of "Madame," accidentally spoke of our amiable host as "Mr." or, worse still, "Herr"—taking down to dinner a fascinating young actress, whilst a diamond-tiarad, stately duchess would graciously give her bejewelled arm to the latest arrival among musical stars. These charming dinners were invariably followed by largely attended receptions, at which eminent singers and instrumentalists would vie with each other in contributing, of their best, to a programme of excellent music; and once in a while, on a fine summer night, the pretty garden, fragrant and luscious in the darkness, which a few stray Japanese lanterns hanging among the trees seemed to make all the more impressive, would re-echo with the sound of old-world madrigals and glees, daintily sung by members of a famous Amateur Society, conducted by an old friend of the house. Really unique evenings were these. On one of them, in June 1898,

Burne-Jones was there, rather silent and thoughtful it seemed to me, as indeed he more frequently appeared since the death, less than two years before, of his beloved comrade, William Morris, whom it had several times been my delight to meet at Burne-Jones' on Sunday mornings when I happened to arrive early enough to find the two friends still in the house, Morris ready to take his leave and Burne-Jones to repair to the garden-studio to work.

Burne-Jones seemed glad to see me. "Let's go indoors," he said; and we went into the house and, finding the little back-room upstairs empty, let ourselves sink down together in the luxurious cushions of the broad oriental divan, and there, the lovely music floating into our ears through the open window, had a good time talking of bygone days and, of course, of Morris. "Ah, my dear fellow," Burne-Jones said to me, "I feel as if a wall I had been leaning against had given way. . . ." On my offering to come and cheer him up by a little music as of old, "Do, my dear man," he said, "do come and bring the little apple,"—meaning my daughter Helen—and we settled upon the very Sunday following, June 19. On that day the dear hand I had grasped in parting was resting for ever. The great painter,

the sweet friend, had died on the Friday morning.

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An event of the summer of 1891 worthy of note was the evening party given for the German Emperor and Empress during their visit to England by Lord and Lady Salisbury, whose guests at Hatfield House they were for two days. On the night of the day of their arrival a concert, under the direction of my old friend, the genial Paolo Tosti, was to take place, at which I had been asked to sing.

The historic old English palaces and mansions had always had a particular fascination for me, and I wondered if by any chance I might be permitted to go to Hatfield in the afternoon of the day appointed for the concert, so as to be able to see some of the treasures of art and relics of history stored up in that ancient and beautiful seat of the Cecils, perhaps to have a look at the famous stables, once Queen Elizabeth's banqueting-hall, or even for a moment to stand in the shadow of the famous oak-tree in the park under which the great Queen is said to have been found sitting and reading when her accession to the throne was announced to her.[1]

[1] In reference to this incident in Elizabeth's life the Rev. Jocelyn J. Antrobus, in an admirable little book, *Hatfield, Some Memories*

It was therefore a most delightful and welcome coincidence, little short of telepathy, when a day or two after I had "booked" the date for the Hatfield House Concert I received a note from Lady Florence Cecil asking me to luncheon on the day of the concert, "so that she might show me a little of Hatfield House during the afternoon." Lady Florence was the daughter of the first Earl of Lathom, whose house in Portland Place had been one of the first of those which opened their doors to me with a warm-hearted, generous hospitality never to be forgotten.

Lord Lathom—or rather Lord Skelmersdale, as he still was when I first knew him—had a great fondness for music, shared by all the members of his family, and the many occasions when, quite informally and *en famille*, I sat down at the piano to sing some of their favourite songs are most pleasant recollections of that period. Lord Lathom was a man as kind and charming and courteous as he was handsome and picturesque. Who that has ever seen him as Lord Chamberlain, splendidly

of its Past, tells us that, "Dean Stanley, on hearing the story some three hundred years later, threw doubts upon the possibility of being able to read out of doors on a November day in England, whereupon Georgina, Lady Salisbury, challenging his doubts, invited him down to Hatfield during the month of November, and the autumn sun being propitious, the Dean was forced to admit that his doubts were unfounded."

erect—he was over six feet in height—the suppleness of his elegant figure emphasised by the becoming uniform, the front of which, down to the chest, was almost completely hidden by a beard, most wonderfully *soignée* and of purest silver-greyish white, could possibly forget that striking personality ?

Perhaps it was Lord Lathom to whom I owed the distinction of being asked to take part in the Hatfield House Concert ; the special request, however, to include in my programme my cycle of songs from *The Trumpeter of Säkkingen* I understood to have come from the guest of the evening, whose grandfather, William I., had, it seems, done those songs the special honour of liking them—perhaps on account of the words.

Well, the day of the concert came at last, a fine, sunny, not too hot July day, ideal for an excursion into the country. Needless to say, I had not been slow in accepting Lady Florence's invitation and, under her charming guidance, took in as much of the endless beauties of Hatfield House and Park as was possible in the limited time at our disposal, for, naturally, we wanted to witness the arrival of the Prince and Princess of Wales, which took place shortly before tea. Soon after that an incredibly long procession of brakes and vans

laden with innumerable boxes and cases and trunks of all shapes and sizes and materials—leather, wood, zinc, followed by half-a-dozen carriages containing servants, male and female, indicated the near approach of the "Allerhöchste Herrschaften,"[1] the Emperor and Empress, who indeed drove up a few minutes later, respectfully greeted by the villagers lining the broad drive in the grounds as far as the magnificently imposing gate leading to the main entrance of Hatfield House.

The concert in the evening took place in the splendid drawing-room famous for the over life-size bronze statue of King James I. standing in a niche over the mantel and—a test of the fine proportions of the room—not looking in the least too big for it. Whilst at the State concerts at Buckingham Palace

[1] The literal translation of the word "Allerhöchst," invariably used in official reference to the members of a German reigning family in their own respective countries, is "All-Highest," though perhaps "*Very* Highest" comes somewhat nearer the meaning.

English expressions, for instance, like "the very best," "the very last," could, rendered in German, only be "*aller*beste, *aller*letzte," etc. On the other hand, "Der Höchste"—"The Highest"—is the epithet most frequently used in German pulpits, books, and poetry instead of the word "God," so that it is not at all unlikely the following actually appeared, as the story goes it did, in the official Court circular of the doings of a Royal party which had been on an excursion to some part of the country famous for a remarkable formation of rocks:

"At this stage the '*Very-Highest* parties' alighted from the carriages and, ascending to the top of the hill, deigned ("geruhten") to admire the wonders of the *Highest*."

all the artists are required to be in their places when the Royal procession enters, here, it being a private, after-dinner affair, it was different. Coming into the room we found the host and hostess and their Royal, Imperial, and other guests leisurely disposed in groups and in lively conversation; some standing, some seated; there had apparently been no change made in the usual distribution of the furniture, and the charming informality of the occasion, of which the absence of the customary row of little gilt chairs and settees was a most agreeable feature, was further manifested by the fact that the concert was allowed to proceed in easy stages with plenty of time between the different items for conversation, and occasional changes of seats on the part of the audience. My songs from *The Trumpeter of Säkkingen* came in about the middle of the programme. The words were taken from Joseph Victor von Scheffel's simple little romance of love, written in blank verse and interspersed now and then with charming lyrics. The whole book had at that time achieved quite an extraordinary popularity among the German people, to whom a decided streak of sentimentality running through the story seemed to have particularly appealed. With few exceptions the lyrics put into the mouth of the hero are of a wholesome,

virile sentiment and real poetry, and of those I had set eight. Among the exceptions, however, there is one poem in which sentimentality is carried to the point of commonplace, as will be seen from the refrain at the end of each stanza:

> God guard thee, dear, it would have been too lovely,
> God guard thee, dear—alas, 'twas not to be!

Naturally it was just that song which became the most popular of all the lyrics in the book, and when, in due time, a second-rate composer had made an opera of the story in which that particular song had been set to music even more banal than the words, with cornet obbligato, the success of the opera was assured. It made the round of all the theatres in Germany, and "God guard thee, dear" became for a time the rage of the public, sung, as it was, by love-sick maidens and lieutenants, played in all the beer-gardens, on barrel-organs, as Trombone solo, strummed on the piano, whistled by the street-boys. Needless to say, it was precisely that poem I had *not* set, and it will be seen presently why I am making a point of that fact.

When "my turn" came—I accompanied myself as usual—the Kaiser happened to stand not far off from the piano, his maimed arm hidden behind his back, whilst not far from the

tail-end of the piano were seated the Princess of Wales, the Empress of Germany, and the Duchess of Portland. When I had finished, the Emperor addressed a few words to me, for the last of which Lady Salisbury, whom I had noticed in the meantime to approach the piano, seemed to be waiting. And, indeed, the moment the Emperor had turned away, Lady Salisbury, pointing with a movement of her head in the direction of the three ladies, informed me that the Princess wanted to see me for a moment. I hurried to obey the command of that gracious and beautiful lady who, gently turning her head toward her neighbour, said to me, " The Empress wishes to speak to you "— and this is what fell from the lips of Her Imperial Majesty :

" How beautifully you sang."

Low bow on my part.

" What a fine voice. . . ."

Another bow.

" How beautiful your songs are. . . ."

Lower bow.

" But will you not also sing us that most beautiful other one ? "

" Which one does Your Majesty refer to ? " I innocently ventured to ask.

" The one—I am sure you know . . . that particularly beautiful one. . . ."

"I am afraid I sang the whole cycle, Ma'm. . . ."

"No, no . . . I mean the one . . . don't you know—the best of all. . . ."

And as I paused for a moment wondering if it were really possible she could mean the . . . Her Majesty removed all doubt on my part by exclaiming, "Don't you know . . . *God guard thee, dear, it would have been too lovely!*"

Tableau. I blushed, expressed my most humble regret at this song not being in my repertoire, as well as the fear that I could not aspire to popularity such as that, and, with a curt nod of the five huge emeralds in Her Majesty's diadem, was dismissed.

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XXVIII

'Twas in the lovely month, not of May as Heine sings but, of June 1893 that London welcomed within its walls . . . By the way, "Within its walls" reminds me of a celebrated German actor who was also an excellent advertiser. Whenever the Court-Theatre of which he was a member was closed for the vacations, he travelled and appeared "as guest" at every theatre in the land, and one could be sure to read in the local papers, the morning after his arrival, "Since yesterday there 'dwells within our walls' . . ." with the result that after a while he was simply known as "The Wall-Dweller"—"Der Mauerweiler."

Well, in June 1893 there dwelt within the walls of London for a while an unusually large number of foreign musical composers who had come to receive honorary degrees at Cambridge on the occasion of the fiftieth birthday of the Cambridge University Musical Society, founded by William Thomson, afterwards Lord Kelvin. Among the new Doctors

of Music were Arrigo Boito and Tschaikovsky. The prologue to Boito's opera, *Mefistofele*, was on the programme of the musical birthday celebration, and as I had to sing the part of the devil—and the devil of a part it is!—the composer called on me one afternoon. The first impression he made on me, a most agreeable one in every respect, furnished a remarkable illustration of the mystery of heredity and, in the case of the two parents being of different nationalities, of the strange way in which the one sometimes predominates over the other. I had never seen Boito before, nor known anything about him save his opera *Mefistofele*, which I greatly admired as a fine, grandly conceived, sincere work of art. The moment Boito entered my room, accompanied by his London host, our mutual friend Albert Visetti, there appeared before my mind's eye the vision of my old home in Breslau in the days of my youth. Every year during the famous Breslau Wool-fair-week Polish noblemen would come to my father's office and occasionally honour our humble home by staying to the mid-day meal. Those Polish land-owners had always impressed me as the most charming people I had ever seen. Their stately carriage, graceful gestures, refined manners and address, their unfailing politeness and bonhomie had

made them appear in my youthful eyes the perfect realization of my idea of a gentleman. And now one of these stood before me in the person of Boito, whose very smile, on shaking my hand, I seemed to have seen long years ago. I could not help telling him my impression, when to my surprise he said, "Well, this is indeed strange, or perhaps it is not—My mother was a Polish Countess."

Tschaikovsky, whom I had the pleasure of seeing nearly every day during his short stay in London, seemed to me, though then on the uppermost rung of the ladder of fame, even more inclined to intervals of melancholy than when I had last met him; indeed, one afternoon, during a talk about the olden days in Petrograd and Moscow, and the many friends there who were no more, he suddenly got very depressed and, wondering what this world with all its life and strife was made for, expressed his own readiness at any moment to quit it. To my gratification I succeeded in dispelling the clouds that had gathered over his mental vision, and during the rest of the afternoon as well as the dinner in the evening he appeared in the best of spirits. That was the last time I saw him, and less than five months later a very strange thing happened. What to call it I know not:

The sketch programmes of the series of concerts by the Scottish Orchestra, which, under my conductorship, were to commence in November, had as usual been printed and published several months before the first concert, which took place in Edinburgh on November 6th, 1893, and on the programme there figured an Elegy for Strings by Tschaikovsky, written in memory of a departed friend. I had selected it as a fine example of the composer's art as being deeply emotional and impressive, even on so limited a scale and without the colouristic wealth of the full modern orchestra. The little work stood first in the second part of the programme. After the usual interval between the parts the members of the orchestra had reassembled on the platform, ready for me. As I made my way through them towards the conductor's desk, one of the gentlemen stopped me for a moment and, handing me the *Evening News*, pointed to the heading of a telegram from Petrograd : Tschaikovsky had died that morning ! . . .

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Those concerts with the Scottish Orchestra, recalling, by the absence of a committee and consequent perfect freedom and independence as regards programmes and rehearsals, those

happy years of my first experiences in Boston, were a great joy to me, though to conduct over seventy concerts in Glasgow, Edinburgh, and a number of smaller towns north of the Tweed, and at the same time keep up the London Symphony Concerts as I did from '93 to '95 was, with all the rehearsals I insisted upon having, rather too much of a good thing, necessitating living mostly in hotels and doing a great amount of night-travelling, and threatening to make a sort of "quick-change artist" of me, for usually there was, between the end of the concert and my jumping into the waiting cab to catch the train for London, barely time to change from evening clothes to travelling suit. But with all that, my heart and mind were in my work, and their power over matter is truly wonderful. Try, for instance, to move your wrist and arm in strict rhythm as a mechanical physical exercise, and after less than five minutes you will be utterly tired out and forced to give it up. The Ninth Symphony takes more than sixty minutes' conducting, and at the end of it you feel like doing it all over again. At least I did.

At the beginning of the year '95 it was with no small gratification that I received the Queen's command to take the whole Scottish Orchestra to Windsor and give a concert before

Her Majesty at the Castle, an honour all the more appreciated by members and conductor as being the first time since the lamented death of the Prince Consort that the Queen had commanded and in person attended a concert at any of her palaces. Princess Louise, the Marchioness of Lorne, had taken a most kindly personal interest in the matter, and graciously engaged to submit to the Queen the three or four different programmes I had sketched for Her Majesty's approval and selection, and to superintend the printing of the chosen one, one copy of which, for the use of Her Majesty, had to be done on a foolscap size sheet in very large, bold type. To the arrangements regarding the stage and the accommodation of the musicians I had already seen some weeks before the event, together with the clerk of works at the Castle, and now, on the day of the concert, the 1st of March, I proceeded to Windsor early in the morning to see myself to the placing of the desks on the platform which had been erected in the beautiful St. George's Hall. The whole of that part of it which was behind the gradually rising stage had been partitioned off as dressing-rooms for the members of the orchestra, who on their arrival in the afternoon were received in the precincts of the Castle by the Marquis of Lorne, under whose interesting

guidance the tour of the grounds was made previous to the final rehearsal and the very substantial late " tea " in the Van Dyck room, following it. At ten o'clock we were all in our places on the platform. Already seated in the body of the hall were the Empress Frederick, the Princess Louise, and the Marquis of Lorne, Lord Edward Pelham Clinton, several ladies-in-waiting, and—in the background—all the available household servants, both female and male. I was standing in my place before the orchestra, baton in hand, my head however turned toward the door at the end of the hall through which the Queen was to enter, and ready to commence on receiving the signal from the equerry stationed there. It was quite exciting. Punctually to a minute at the appointed time, a quarter past ten, the equerry's handkerchief waved the signal. Everybody rose, and amid the strains of " God save the Queen," resounding gloriously imposing through the nearly empty hall, Her Majesty appeared, leaning on a cane and gently supported under the left elbow by a tall, magnificent Indian attendant in native costume, and followed by more ladies and gentlemen of the court. A member of the orchestra, a dear old Scot, told me afterwards, in the train, that that moment had been the most impressive of his

life. He trembled all over, he said, and had the greatest difficulty in repressing his tears. The concert went off without a hitch. The Queen, to whom I had the honour of presenting the excellent leader of the orchestra, my dear old friend Maurice Sons, seemed to have been particularly pleased with the performance of Mendelssohn's Scottish Symphony, and expressed her satisfaction to me in the most gracious terms. At half-past eleven the Marquis of Lorne presided, again in the Van Dyck room, at a sumptuous and highly relished supper, and a little after one o'clock in the morning a special train steamed out of Windsor station, carrying men and instruments, without change, back to Glasgow, where on the night following I conducted the sixty-eighth concert of the season. During the course of it I received a telegram from Windsor Castle : " Queen hopes you and your orchestra reached Glasgow safely, and that no one suffered from the fatigue of the long journey." Needless to say it elicited a storm of applause as I read it to the audience, who no less than the orchestra fully and gratefully appreciated this gracious and touching thoughtfulness on the part of our revered sovereign.

Soon afterwards, having carefully weighed the pros and cons and decided, though most

reluctantly, to give up my post in Scotland, another cause for feeling deeply gratified reached me in the shape of this letter :

GLASGOW, *March* 7, 1895.

DEAR MR. HENSCHEL—We cannot allow you to leave Glasgow without expressing to you our high appreciation of what you have accomplished as conductor of the Scottish Orchestra. You have been unremitting in your attention to every detail of the work, and most unsparing of yourself in the labour which the perfecting of the performances entailed. You will no doubt find your reward in the high reputation you have won for the orchestra, but our thanks are none the less due to you for it. Regretting that you could not see your way to give us the benefit of your artistic co-operation in the work of the orchestra for a further period—We remain, yours very sincerely,

JAMES BELL, Lord Provost, Chairman of the Choral and Orchestral Union.

JAMES SUMMERS, President Glasgow Choral Union.

JAMES A. ALLEN, Chairman Scottish Orchestra Company (Limited).

XXIX

That those years of my conducting the London Symphony and Scottish Orchestras were full of interesting incidents and experiences, musical and otherwise, goes without saying. On one occasion I remember having had particular reason to be grateful for being a singer as well. The soloist announced for one of the London concerts had been a foreign tenor, new to London, who had made a very favourable impression in musical circles and at other concerts during the season. At the rehearsal on the day before the concert all went well, but on the evening of the concert he had not yet arrived at the time I was ready to commence, which I always liked to do with unrelenting punctuality. Much to my discomfort I had to wait a minute or two, but then went to conduct the overture, trusting he would come during its performance. Returning, however, after it, to the artists' room, I found, instead, a telegram from the gentleman, greatly

deploring his sudden indisposition, and utter inability to sing a note. His solo was to have been Beethoven's beautiful "Buss-Lied" (Song of Penitence), also one of my own favourites, and on going back to the platform and announcing the disappointment to the audience, I added that, if they didn't mind, I would sing the song myself, which I promptly did, accompanying myself, as usual, on the piano. After the concert Deichmann, leader of the second violins and the wit of the orchestra, remarked that of course nothing could have been more appropriate than the "*Buss*"-*Lied* being sung by the *conductor*. Dear Deichmann! Some of my older readers will remember the genial old man who had sat at the head of the second fiddles for nearly a generation. Nothing, I think, would have induced him to change his place for one among the first. He seemed to have known and lived up to a saying of Joubert's: "Il faut aimer sa place, c'est-à-dire la bassesse ou la supériorité de son état. Si tu es roi, aime ton sceptre; si tu es valet, ta livrée." Deichmann's *livrée* was his art, which he loved enough to be content with serving her according to his limitations. A shining example of conscientiousness. . . . *Requiescat in pace!*

Another occasion I remember was a concert

by the Scottish Orchestra in one of the smaller towns, not far from Glasgow. Saint-Saëns' picturesque "Danse macabre" was on the programme, and about an hour before the concert the librarian coolly informed me that the xylophone had been left behind! Those of my readers who may not know what a xylophone is I will try to enlighten on the subject. It is a musical instrument made on the same principle as and very much like those little toy-pianos children love to amuse themselves with. Only whereas in those the flat pieces corresponding to the keys of a real piano are made of metal or glass, in the xylophone they are made of hard wood. These pieces of wood, gradated in size, are tuned to scale, and lightly rest on tiny disks of wood or leather, or on a bed of straw, so as to make the sound vibrate, even if, naturally, only for an instant. The sound produced by striking these "keys" with little hammers is quite pleasing, though perhaps somewhat weird. I know of no musical work of serious intent in which a more appropriate use of that instrument is made than just this French Dance of Death, especially where, towards the end, as the orgy, before the cock-crow, is at its highest and wildest, it illustrates the rattling of the bones of the dancing skeletons in the grimmest,

most wonderfully realistic fashion. To play the work without the xylophone would have been a wrong to the composer by depriving the orchestration of one of its most ingenious and characteristic factors, and yet, the librarian having brought no other music but that required for the concert, there was no possibility of substituting another work for it. It was an awkward predicament I found myself in, and I really did not know exactly what to do, when all of a sudden it came to me: I knew that in the score nearly every note given to the xylophone was duplicated by the same note in the oboe; it was therefore not so much the actual *musical* note of the xylophone which mattered, as rather the mere sound of the wood struck by the hammers. So I called for the gentleman of the percussion, gave him the xylophone part, and instructed him to play the whole of it *on the leg of a chair*! The result was an unqualified success. Nobody saw the chair, everybody heard the sound of the wood, which even we musicians could have sworn came from a xylophone. And why not? The chair was made of wood (xylon), and it gave a sound (phone). Meeting the composer in Paris the year following I told him the story, and he was as much amused by it as we had been at the time.

. . . . . .

Socially too these eleven years were fraught with interesting events of the most varied kind. Every succeeding year seemed to see a widening of the circle of our friends, among whom to count Professor and Mrs. Huxley was one of our greatest and most cherished privileges. I was not given to entering in the diary I have kept ever since 1873 anything beyond the mere facts of the day's happenings, but after our first dinner *en famille* with those rare people I find the record of that event commented on in the words, "Like a refreshing bath in a clear mountain stream." And indeed I shall never forget the impression left by those only too few and short hours of purest happiness spent at the Huxleys' home in St. John's Wood,—one of those old-world, cosy country-houses standing in their own grounds, which, alas, are more and more disappearing, even from the suburbs of London, making room for hideous barracks-like tenements. It was inspiring, elevating to a degree, to see the great savant in the bosom of his family, wonderfully simple, unassuming, sweet, affectionate, and full of humour and wit; full, too, of mischief, which he seemed to relish with the youthful mirth of a schoolboy. When a few weeks later my wife, who had engaged to sell autographs and signed photographs of

celebrities at a Charity Bazaar at the Royal Albert Hall,—it was called the Silver Fête, though I forget for what reason,—wrote to Professor Huxley begging him to let her have some of his for that purpose, I should not wonder if it was in remembrance of that "jolly" evening—I can find no other word, incongruous though it must sound in reference to that great and learned man—that, in complying with her request, he accompanied the precious autographs with the following note:

MY DEAR MRS. HENSCHEL—I enclose the autographs and four photographs, a supply which I am afraid you will find in excess of the demand. I trust you will appreciate the sternly philosophic air of the photographs. If ever you have suspected me of a capacity for frivolity, banish the thought—*this is the real man*!

Strangely enough, this was not the first time a request for autographs had elicited from the yielding victim a personal observation greatly enhancing the value of a mere signature. In the early 'eighties there prevailed among ladies a sort of craze for "autograph fans," *i.e.*, fans of sandalwood, each rib of which was intended for the signature of a famous man or woman. My wife was the happy possessor of such a treasure and when, in Boston, she sent it for that purpose to Oliver Wendell Holmes, that

dear old man returned it with the following lines :

My dear Mrs. Henschel—It delights me if I can in any way please you who have lent so much happiness to the air we breathe. I only fear that you will find it hard to get a cool breath from a fan which holds the names of so many warm friends.

. . . . . .

XXX

In the year 1898 I had commenced the writing of a three-act opera, based on a novel by Richard Voss, then one of the most popular writers in Germany, entitled *Nubia*, which my friend Max Kalbeck in Vienna had made into a libretto for me. The action of the story being laid in Italy I was only too happy to find in that fact an excuse for spending a good part of the winter in that country, hoping perhaps to be able to visit the remote little village of Saracinesco, three thousand feet above the sea, in the Sabine Hills, the scene of the first and second acts, that of the third being Rome, and thus to get some "atmosphere" or, at any rate, some local colour for my work. For some reason or other—very likely I was to look at and engage suitable rooms before letting the family follow—I first went to Rome alone, where, for a week or so, I was the guest of a dear and deeply mourned friend—he died in 1908—Harry Brewster.

Difficult as it must always be to convey in words a clear idea of so wonderful and mysterious a thing as a human being, it would require the exquisite pen of a Henry James to do anything like justice to a personality of such rare qualities, such striking originality, to a character at once so simple and complex as that of Harry Brewster. American by parentage, he yet had never lived in America, but made his home in Paris, the city of his birth, and in Rome, occasionally coming over to England for a more or less protracted visit. Being what is called a man of leisure, he was able to follow the bent of his heart and mind and devote a good deal of his time to the pursuit of science, literature, and the fine arts, and did it with an inborn fastidiousness as severe in regard to these as to matters of dress and food. He was both philosopher and poet, and not only *was* but *lived* both. His books, *The Prison*, *The Statuette and the Background*, *L'âme païenne*, are masterpieces of style and logic, written, moreover, with a keen and unerring sense of beauty, making them fascinating reading even to one who, like myself, must confess to never having derived much pleasure—nor, for that matter, much benefit—from the perusal of philosophical books. His poems, too—in French—of which only a few have, recently,

been published, are both as to sentiment and language perfect examples of what there is best in the modern French School of poetry. To all these accomplishments, which in his almost bashful modesty he would have repudiated as such, were added a charming sense of humour, great kindness of heart, a calm serenity of mind, and—a rarely beautiful body. As, looking up from writing this, my eyes rest on Sargent's charcoal drawing of Brewster on his death-bed, it seems to me I have never seen a more wonderfully impressive presentment of the nobility, the majesty, the glory of death.

The stuff a man is made of can often be gauged best by the knowledge of something he did or said (as has been shown by the little story I told of Alma Tadema), and the following incident in Brewster's life will, I am sure, give a better idea of his character than I have been able to do in the preceding sketch.

In the large households of Italy, particularly, I think, in Rome, it is not unusual for a family to have a major-domo, that is to say, a sort of superior cook-housekeeper who, besides his salary, gets a certain sum per month to "run the house" on. Brewster's establishment in that splendid old "Palazzo Antici Mattei" in Rome was founded on that system. His

was the good luck of having a major-domo who not only gave him every satisfaction as such, but whom he also esteemed as a man, and who, in his turn, seemed greatly and almost affectionately attached to his master. It was therefore a great shock to Brewster when one day, in examining the books which were brought to him at regular intervals for that purpose, he seemed to detect some irregularities in the keeping of the accounts. At first he ascribed it to a probable oversight on his own part, and, loath to believe in the possibility of dishonesty on that of the trusted servant, waited for the next occasion, and again the next, until, alas, he could no longer reject the proofs in his hands. There was no doubt the man had for some time past deliberately and systematically deceived and robbed him. Having grown to be sincerely fond of the man, the discovery caused Brewster pain amounting to a real grief. This he carried about with him for several days, unable to decide on the course that would appear the best to be taken in a matter which affected him very deeply. At last his mind was made up. Seated before the writing-table in his study, the proofs of the man's guilt spread before him, he rang the bell and asked for the major-domo to be sent to him. The man entered, visibly turning pale at the

sight of his master's serious face, and evidently divining the reason for this unwonted summons. There was an ominous silence in the lofty room as the two men faced each other, until Brewster broke it by quietly telling his servant how great a grief it was to him to have found that for some months past he had been cheated by him . . . that he could only assume the salary he had been paying him had been insufficient, and that from that day on he would double it. . . . That was all. Doubtless a risky thing to do; one which might, in nine cases out of ten, have proved an utter failure. But Brewster knew the sort of nature he had to deal with. There were no words of response from the servant. Prostrating himself before his master and kissing his hands, he silently sobbed until Brewster bade him get up. The man then left the room as one in a daze—not only a better, but a good man for the rest of his life.

Such was dear Harry Brewster. To be for some time under the immediate influence of his soothing, yet inspiriting personality, was a real joy to me. He showed great interest in the opera I was writing—by the way, it was he who wrote the libretto to Ethel Smyth's *The Wreckers*—and enthusiastically entered into my proposition of a trip to

Saracinesco. He knew the very man who would organize the expedition: a native of the place, owner of one of those innumerable little shops in Rome where you can find all sorts and conditions of antiquities, from an old Spanish carved shrine of the Virgin to a broken nose or finger of a bronze Roman emperor, from a patinated little vestal lamp to a marble sarcophagus; oil-paintings too; perhaps he was the identical man of whom it is told that, when offering for sale two "genuine Titians," and being asked the reason why one of them—considering the two canvases were of exactly the same size—was more expensive than the other, replied "Ah, you see, this one is *still more genuine*!"

Well, the man—his name was Belisario—was negotiated with, a day was settled upon and a charming party made up, consisting of Brewster, his daughter, and an equally courageous lady friend—for there was a good deal of physical exertion, perhaps even a little danger, involved in the enterprise—a very congenial and musical attaché of one of the embassies, and myself. At the last moment another mutual friend, a very entertaining American, begged to be allowed to join the party,—a proposal which was gladly accepted, though not without some misgivings as to

accommodation and commissariat, there being no hotel at Saracinesco. Belisario, however, vouched for the thoroughness of the arrangements, of which he had the entire charge, and on the appointed day our merry party started for Vicovaro, the little wayside-station beyond Tivoli from which the pilgrimage to Saracinesco was to be made.

Alighting from the train we found Belisario waiting and ready to receive us. His large-brimmed, soft felt hat, wide, sleeveless cloak, and high boots made the gun slung over his shoulder look as if meant for attacking rather than eventually protecting a harmless and peaceful little party of travellers. Exciting too was the sight of a row of six mules standing patiently with their drivers awaiting our arrival. After having packed what little of luggage, and the few dainties in the way of food we had brought, which we could not expect Belisario to provide, on the back of those of the mules which were not required for the accommodation of the ladies or any of us who should feel inclined to ride, we set off. The lovely spring day, the glorious scenery, and perhaps also the novelty of the experience had given us all a buoyancy beyond the usual, and the first hour passed as quickly as if we had been promenading leisurely on Monte Pincio instead of climbing

on the stony zigzag path of a rather steep, rocky hill. Now and then the services of a mule would be requisitioned for a change, and before long the continued exertion as well as the heat of the sun, growing with the day, seemed to result in our taking our task somewhat more seriously. We should indeed have greatly wondered how people could ever have thought of building homes on the summit of so high and bare a rock—already, after the second hour, trees and shrubs had ceased utterly—had we not beforehand endeavoured to make ourselves more or less acquainted with the history of the strange place we were going to see—a history closely interwoven with that of Rome and the Popes.

Early in the ninth century, when Gregory IV. was Pope, the Saracens had invaded Italy, and after repeated successful raids fortified themselves in some of the high commanding places in the land. For more than a hundred years they proved a scourge to the country, of which they devastated whole provinces. When at last, A.D. 916, they were finally beaten and destroyed in the Roman Campagna, those few that had escaped fled to the fortresses in the hills, of which Saracinesco appears to be the only one that has survived to this day. Thus the inhabitants of Saracinesco have been for

more than a thousand years the descendants, from generation to generation, of those Moors; and Arabic names like Mastorre, Argante, Almanzor, Margutte are still in frequent use among them and preferred to those of Latin origin. No wonder they are a proud race, being able to look back on ten centuries of ancestors. We were told, for instance, that no Saracinesco maiden, though their beauty is famous, will ever be found among the crowd of picturesque girls in the Piazza di Spagna for the painters to choose their models from. Marrying outside their own community is an almost unheard of occurrence.

Well, we were approaching the summit at last, and could see a few huts on a prominence of rock almost perpendicularly above our heads. Soon we met a few of the inhabitants, who, prepared by Belisario for our coming, had evidently been unable to restrain their curiosity, and preceded the others to see the arrival of strangers in their midst—a most rare event according to Belisario, who assured us that it had been years since his people had looked upon a " foreigner," as even the Italians are called by them.

And now our little caravan had reached its goal. Before Belisario's " Villino " we halted; our mules having been delivered of their

burdens, these were taken into the house, the only one worthy of the name as we soon learned. By this time the entire population had turned out to welcome us, and a truly wonderful crowd it was. Both the women, who appeared to be in the great majority, and the men were extraordinarily handsome creatures—tall, supple, beautifully grown, with dusky but clear complexions, large expressive eyes, finely arched brows, and deep-black slightly wavy hair. Their costumes, too, struck us as quite remarkable, not only because of the faded gorgeousness and great variety of colour, but also by the stately, almost royal way the people wore them. Every one of the women, some of them carrying in their arms the sweetest little *bambini* imaginable, wrapped in shawls of strangest tints and textures, looked to me, bearing herself like a queen, proud and splendid in her rags, the very prototype of my beloved operatic heroine, Nubia. Never shall I forget my horror on seeing, several months later, at the first dress-trial rehearsal on the stage of the Dresden Opera House, the famous Royal Court singer who had been cast for the part, emerge from the wings in a scrupulously clean, beautifully starched and ironed, brand new, altogether irreproachably proper costume, such as you see on Roman picture post cards!

It required a good deal of tact on my part to break it to her that that would not do; and only with the greatest difficulty could I persuade her that beauty and rags are by no means incompatible, and that the generous, great heart of a fine, lovable woman like Nubia would shine only the more by contrast with her beggarly clothes. Still, even then, at the performance her make-up could not compare with that of Scheidemantel—dear to the memory of Covent Gardeners by his splendid *Hans Sachs*—who impersonated, in my opera, Argante, her lover. That was really perfect. His dark-green, faded old cloak, for instance, made purposely for the occasion, looked as if he had inherited it from his great-grandfather, and the rest of his make-up was quite in keeping with it.

But to return from make-believe to reality. It was difficult for us to tear ourselves away from the rare spectacle these people and all our surroundings presented; but Belisario announced that the various baskets and cases containing provisions had been unpacked, and a repast was awaiting us inside. Like a king he bade us enter his palace, where we hurried through a meal which under ordinary circumstances we should have been glad to lengthen; but we were anxious to get

out again as soon as possible. Before however doing so, Belisario made another announcement, rather startling, to the effect that we were one bed short. The two ladies were to share one room with two beds; Brewster and I to have each a room and a bed of our own; but for the attaché and the American there was only one bed, and one straw mattress on the floor. The American, who it will be remembered had joined our party at the last moment, was up to the occasion. Witty and shrewd fellow as he was, "Let's toss up," he called to the attaché: "What am I thinking of—blue or yellow?" "Yellow," replied the guileless attaché. "Wrong—blue!—You take the mattress." And so thoroughly in earnest did he seem that it was not until the next morning we all, needless to say amidst great hilarity, saw the joke, and realised that it would not have made the slightest difference which way the loser had guessed. And now we started on our stroll through the village, a motley collection of little huts built of clay and rough stones without foundations, so that the floors were as uneven as the roads themselves, and, like these, paved with cobbles. Hardly any of the huts we entered had more than just one room, which in some cases we noticed had to accommodate a family of from four to six people, not

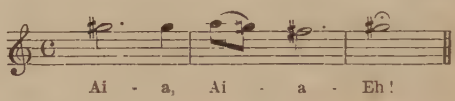
to speak of the goat and the ass. The only sign of an attempt at agriculture was now and then an occasional patch of cabbages and potatoes by the hut of some better-to-do inhabitant. All the capable men go down to the valley in the spring to work, remaining there for months at a time, and we were lucky to find so many youths in the village owing to the Easter holidays.

All the time during our stroll we were ascending until we came to the old fortress, a small plateau on the very top of the hill, in the midst of which a huge tree, apparently very old—I forget what kind it was—spread its branches over the most interesting relic of the old days: two cisterns built by the founders of the place. To that spot we made up our minds to return in the evening. I had been very anxious to hear some of their music and to see some of their dances, and all scruples as to the propriety of such things on a sacred day—it was Good Friday, March 31, 1899—were overcome by the promise of a generous supply of Velletri and the consideration that, after all, there was no one to consider. The priest came up from Vicovaro only very rarely to minister to the spiritual needs of the community, and Belisario, to whom the people seemed to look as a leader, a sort of elder or provost, raised no objection.

So after a substantial tea we all repaired to the plateau where, apprised by Belisario, the whole population had already forgathered, prepared for high festival. The scene was glorious beyond description. Three thousand feet below us the vast stretch of the Campagna was spread out before our enchanted eyes; a fine mist, delicately tinted by the glow of the setting sun, was beginning to rise from the deep; blue shadows were slowly creeping up to the rosy tops of the surrounding hills, and in the far distance we could just distinguish, phantomlike, the majestic dome of St. Peter's. Some of the older men had brought up their *pifferi* (instruments similar to our Scottish bagpipes), and, taking their places on a little elevation, commenced tuning them. The rest of the people had formed a ring, out of which stepped two young women and two young men, the latter with sheep-skins thrown over their shoulders, looking veritable fauns. They placed themselves in position, the two women opposite the two men, saluting each other by gracefully courtseying and bowing. There was a certain solemnity in the action. The people, by receding a few steps, widened the ring to give the dancers more room, the pipes struck up, and now the dance, a sort of gavotte, began. First the maidens had it alone, then the boys,

and so for a while alternately, until the women, pretending to run from the men, were pursued and gently caught by their lovers. The dance of the two couples now assumed a livelier character, and it was difficult to say which of the two—maidens or youths—were the more graceful. When the dance was finished, there was a short rest for the *pifferari*, after which two fresh couples entered the arena and the whole thing was done over again. There was a charm and a fascination about it all which it would be impossible to describe. Grace and dignity are, no doubt, innate to these simple mountain folk; but how on earth and where could they have acquired a perfection in the art of dancing which even later Russian Ballet experiences could not dwarf? In the pauses between the dances both executants and onlookers refreshed themselves by draughts from one of the long-necked, large-bellied *fiaschi* of luscious, golden Velletri, several dozen of which stood in serried rows—Belisario had evidently made his preparatory arrangements with cunning forethought—beneath the tree. It was now growing dark; the light of the waning moon in the deep-blue sky, though enhancing the loveliness of the scene, proved insufficiently powerful; lanterns were fetched from the huts, whilst some of the men brought

torches, by the fitful glare of which the dancing was resumed. More and more couples now entered the ring, quicker and quicker grew the pace of the music, wider and wider the circles of flowing skirts and sheep-skins, redder and redder the cheeks of the dancers,—we had at last arrived at the Tarantella. The excited onlookers, shouting every now and then at the top of their voices a short musical phrase of



unmistakably Eastern origin, spurred into a state of frenzy the young dancers, who accompanied certain accents of the rhythm with shrieks of joy, the wildness of which would make a Scottish reel seem funereal in comparison. It was all very wonderful; most wonderful perhaps as we were conscious all the time of the deep, silent Campagna far below and the stillness of the Eternal City in the distance. . . .

Arduous and eventful though the day had been, none of us felt inclined to leave so engaging a scene. It was long after midnight when at last we tore ourselves away and sought our beds—the attaché his palliasse; and the faint sounds of singing and dancing reaching our ears whilst we were waiting for "Nature's soft nurse," seemed to make reality and dream melt into one.

Richer for the extraordinary impressions of this memorable Good Friday, and deploring the fleetness of the hours, especially the happy ones, we set out on our return journey early the following morning, accompanied part of the way by nearly the whole of the populace, to whom our visit had brought pleasure as well as profit; for who that has ever been in Italy does not know the irresistibility of those fascinating beggars, particularly those charming *piccoline* when, holding out their dirty little brown hands, they keep running beside you, piteously crying "*Ho fame, fame,*" all the while smiling roguishly, well knowing that their plump little ruddy cheeks are belying their words.

We made for Tivoli which, through the beautiful valley of the Empiglione, we reached after five hours' walking, ready for the excellent meal mine host of the famous Osteria delle Cascade prepared for us in a most obligingly short time; and a few hours later, from the train that took us back to Rome, we cast a parting and loving look in the direction of Saracinesco, where we had realised more than ever before that "Nature is the art of God."

When not long afterwards we left Rome, where, although it was my work which had been the primary object of our visit, we

certainly had not allowed ourselves to lag behind other visitors in our zeal as regards sightseeing, I could not help remembering, sadly appreciating its truth, a *bon mot* with which the late Pope Pius IX. was credited: Giving audience during a medical Congress to a number of famous professors attending the same, and addressing one of them, he asked him how long he intended staying in the Eternal City. "Three months," the professor was happy to reply. "I am afraid," rejoined the Pope, "you will not know much of Rome when you leave." Then, turning with the same question to another, whose answer was "Four weeks"—"Well," said the Pope, "you'll see a good deal of Rome." Upon the third expressing profound regret at his visit being necessarily limited to ten days—"Ah," exclaimed His Holiness, "you'll see all Rome!"

Alas! we had been of the "Three months" species.

. . . . . .

But I fear I must leave off some time or other, though, as regards material, I am sure I could go on for quite a while yet; but, having come to the end of the century, I might as well let this be the end of the book too. In laying down my pen and taking leave of those of my readers who have been patient enough to follow

me thus far, I cast a last surveying glance over the past and, with feelings of sadness and keen disappointment, realise how grievously short of my aspirations and endeavours has fallen what I have been able to accomplish in my life. Is it perhaps that my natural talents have been too diverse—I even dabbled in painting and often regretted not having chosen it as a profession—and that instead of concentrating all my energies upon one object from the beginning, I allowed them to be scattered over too many, thus achieving nothing notable in any? Two things only I can think of, which conscience permits me to contemplate with something resembling satisfaction. One is: I have never betrayed the ideal of my art by consciously stooping to the unworthy, to the commonplace. The other: Music in England at this moment is on a very high level. Nowhere in the world, for instance, can there now be found orchestras superior to the best we have here. If it really could be, as generous and forbearing friends would have me believe, that by founding, thirty years ago, at a time when there was no opportunity of hearing orchestral music during the winter season in London proper, the London Symphony Concerts, and in the face of great difficulties conducting them for eleven years, I

have given the impetus, or even in some measure contributed, to the marvellous development of Music, creative and recreative, in this beloved land, I should die content in the thought of not, after all, having lived in vain.

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